

Director's Report

Employee Service Recognition. On June 20th we held a long overdue staff event to recognize the service of ODL employees. The state provides certificates and pins to agencies in five year increments for presentation to employees for service to the State. We presented certificates and pins to forty-four ODL staff members who have provided five hundred sixty-five combined years of employment at the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. The following language is from the certificate:

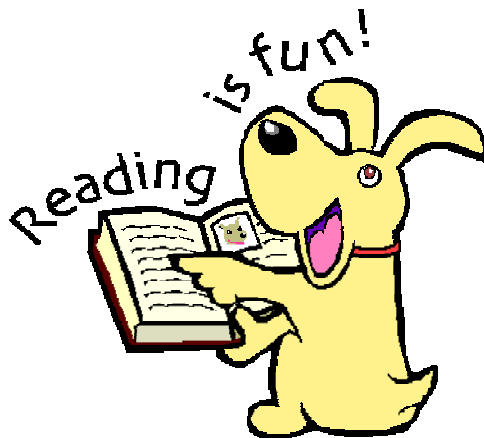
Public Service requires continuing commitment and dedication to the needs of the people of Oklahoma. The very effectiveness and efficiency of state government depends in large measure on the hard work and perseverance demonstrated by state employees. In recognition of the effort, contributions and commitment to excellence of Oklahoma State Employees, I hereby publicly commend you and say . . .

Congratulations on a Job Well Done

The certificate is signed by the Governor.

I have included a list of individuals by years of service at the end of my report. Since we were playing catch up for several years, the staff has served a minimum of the years on the list and some are almost to the next five year level. I want to add my congratulations to the staff and thanks for their contributions over these years. It is the staff who serves our customers and creates a better state in which to live.

Septemberfest. ODL staff will be participating in Septemberfest for the first time this year. Held annually on the grounds of the Governor's Mansion, Septemberfest is a wonderful family-oriented celebration of all things Oklahoma. This year's event will be on Saturday, Sept. 10th. Begun under Governor Keating the event is designed for families to explore Oklahoma's rich heritage and diversity, its worlds of agriculture and farming, an array of entertainment and arts and crafts. Our plans are to distribute balloons with the logo shown below.



Other activities in our tent will be to name your favorite book and to vote for your choice of the one book all Oklahomans are to read in 2006. Susan Feller and Bill Young are the leaders on this pilot project.

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. There have been two recent opportunities for grant applications to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The first is for a Rural Library Sustainability grant which will provide training to public librarians throughout the state. Linda Gens of the Office of Library Development is the coordinator for this grant. The bulk of the funding will pay for training. ODL staff will be trained on the curriculum developed for the Foundation and then will offer training across the state for public librarians. The public librarians will receive mileage reimbursement, overnight lodging if necessary, and compensation for a substitute to cover their library if it's a one person operation. The grant will also fund sending three public librarians to a national library conference.

The other grant is to replace the public access computers provided to the public libraries in 1999 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Every library will have the opportunity to receive as many computers as they originally received. We are still in the preliminary stages of learning about this grant and how it will work but we are so appreciative of the continuing commitment of the Foundation for their generosity. If all eligible libraries are funded, the gift will be \$642,000 to the public libraries in the state. This will be a tremendous help for the public libraries in the state who all struggle to meet the demand for technology by their customers.