

Director's Report
ODL Board Meeting of December 2, 2005

Continuing Education Opportunity for ODL Board members. The Attorney General has been conducting workshops for state agency board members, staff, and the public on the Open Meetings and Open Records Acts. The workshop was previously held across the state this fall in ten cities. On December 7th from 1 to 4 p.m. it will be held at the MetroTech campus in Oklahoma City. You are invited to attend. There is no charge for the workshop but we do need to register you. ODL can pay your mileage if you attend. Let me or Karen Currie know if you would us to handle your registration.

On the Road, Again. The fall has been a busy travel time for me. Following our last Board meeting I attended the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) meeting in Salem, Oregon. I was in charge of the continuing education event on early childhood library initiatives in the states. The event went well thanks to excellent presenters and I believe we were all inspired by the work being done across the country. I was asked to fill the Vice President's office in COSLA due to a vacancy which I considered an honor.

The Western Council of State Library Agencies met in October in Jackson, Wyoming which was another beautiful location. The focus of the meeting was on the Institute of Museum and Library Services grant on certification for public library directors who do not have a Masters in Library Science. One of the agenda items for our Board meeting will be consideration of establishing reciprocity with our Oklahoma certification program for recipients of the Western Council certificate. The Oklahoma Library Association/Oklahoma Department of Libraries Certification Board approved the reciprocity concept as did the Oklahoma Library Association Executive Board. Your consideration of this concept will be the final action necessary to establish reciprocity. This would mean that if someone who holds a Western Council of State Libraries certificate moved to Oklahoma, the individual would not have to re-take the courses required for our Institute in Public Librarianship. The individual would, however, have to meet the Oklahoma continuing education requirements in order to keep their certificate renewed.

My other travel has been in Oklahoma. The Public Library Directors Council held a retreat in Jenks in early October. The meeting was very well attended. I was asked to present information about ODL and how it had been affected by the revenue shortfalls of the last few years. One of my objectives was to inform the group about services which ODL is mandated to provide but a public library might not use. Additional presentations were provided by Representative Barbara Staggs and a crisis management expert. Representative Staggs was recognized by the group for her legislation creating funding for rural public library construction grants. The retreat was a success and my congratulations to Donna Morris, chair of PLDC and to the local arrangements team of the Tulsa City-County Library.

The Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma (FOLIO) Literary Landmark event in McAlester in October was wonderful. This year the McAlester Public Library was selected as the site to recognize the work of poet John Berryman. Berryman was recognized in 2002 by the Oklahoma Center for the Book as the Ralph Ellison Award winner. John Berryman, poet, biographer, and editor was born October 25, 1914, and spent the first ten years of his life near McAlester, Oklahoma. The Literary Landmark award is always a moving experience as we celebrate the exceptional authors who have called Oklahoma home.

I also attended the Red Dirt Book Festival in Shawnee. This is the second time for this festival which is held every other year. Authors, including your fellow ODL Board member, Hannibal Johnson, speak about their experiences as writers. It was very inspiring to hear about the work being done by Oklahoma authors.

Another important event that I attended was the groundbreaking for an addition to the Noble Public Library. A donor has made possible a significant expansion of the building and the local county commissioners and community are making additional gifts as well. The turnout for the groundbreaking was large with many children and young people present. Seeing the excitement among those in attendance was very heartwarming. A meeting room for the community will be a significant feature of the expansion. It was my first trip to the Noble Library and I look forward to returning for the grand opening.

State Aid. Thanks to the hard work of many library advocates and the Oklahoma legislature, the state aid to public libraries was significantly increased this year. In response to the request from municipal libraries for use of the same formula for both library system and municipal libraries, the new funds were allocated to mileage for the municipal libraries. Because one county didn't qualify for state aid this year and some of the communities as well, there were additional funds available to distribute among the municipal libraries. First we restored the minimum grants of \$1500 to all municipal libraries and then we divided the remainder of the funds equally among all municipal libraries.

The budget request for next year includes the funding for per capita reimbursement to municipal libraries for individuals who live in the county but outside a community which provides library service as well as a return to the FY2002 levels of per capita and mileage for both library systems and municipal libraries. At the Public Library Directors Council retreat held in early October, the group was strategizing for the coming legislative session. The grassroots effort paid off this year and they expect to build on their success for next year.