

Director's Report
ODL Board of Directors Meeting of December 1, 2006

As you read over the attached division reports I believe you will be as impressed as I am by the leadership of the ODL staff. They are serving their customers and the citizens of Oklahoma by developing training and services that benefit everyone. We are reaching out to new groups at the same time that we continue to provide sustaining programs to our core customers. It is an impressive effort made possible by the energy, talent, and dedication of the staff of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. I am so proud to be part of this outstanding group of individuals.

As part of our Board meeting on December 1st, we will be recognizing specific staff with pins and certificates for their years of service to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. The following staff will be recognized:

Ching-yu Chi, 25 years

Marilyn Miller, 10 years

Rebecca Barker, 5 years

Troy Miller, 5 years

Lori Campbell, 5 years

Oklahoma Reads Oklahoma. We are starting the fourth and final year of the Oklahoma Reads Oklahoma project. The last program of 2006 was presented at the Shattuck Public Library on November 12th. Dayna Dunbar has done seventy programs as part of this project in the last year. She told the group in Shattuck that the experience has resulted in her moving back to Oklahoma from Arizona. Her most recent book was not originally set in Oklahoma but her agent suggested it wasn't working and that she re-write it with Oklahoma as the setting, which she did. Dayna told the group that clearly her inspiration for writing was Oklahoma.

The final book to be discussed by all of Oklahoma in 2007 will be Fire in Beulah by Rilla Askew. The selection of the book to be discussed each year is done by an online voting process. This book on the Tulsa race riot is a powerful story that deals with a difficult subject that is part of the commemoration of Oklahoma's history. We do not celebrate this event but we recognize its deep impact on the development of our state. The recent digitization of the documents in our Archives division on the Tulsa race riot will provide additional contemporary resources of the event. For your information, ODL Board member Hannibal Johnson has written a children's book Up from the Ashes: a Story

about Building Community also about this event. There are many other resources on this topic which will support the 2007 selection.

On the Road. As always, there have been several important library related events at which I have represented ODL. Two of them have involved library dedications. The first was the groundbreaking ceremony at LaFortune Park in Tulsa for the Herman and Kate Kaiser Library. Former ODL Board member Glenda Kilmer is the branch manager for this branch of the Tulsa City-County Library so it was a particular pleasure to be there in that beautiful location to see the beginnings of what will be a beautiful building. This library is being built with all private funds.

The other event was the Shattuck Public Library opening. Although the building is not completely finished, it is a knockout. The library is located in a former bank building and has been dramatically updated with a new ceiling, new windows, new lighting, new paint and carpet, new shelving which was purchased with state aid, new furniture, and an elevator has been added to allow access to the meeting rooms located above the library. The new computers from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grant had pride of place in the front of the library. The children's section was still under construction but I am sure it will also be a tremendous improvement. Judy Abbott, the Shattuck librarian, has worked long and hard with her city and friends to make this library renovation a true success. Congratulations to both Tulsa and Shattuck for their exciting new facilities to serve their customers.

Another important and lovely event was the Literary Landmark dedication of Sequoyah's Cabin outside of Sallisaw. This wonderful initiative is the work of former ODL Board member Julia Brady Ratliff. The Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma (FOLIO) organization began this project in 2001. The guidelines for Literary Landmark status come from Friends of Libraries USA, FOLUSA. It was a beautiful day and a wonderful ceremony. Each year the list of honorees makes me even more aware of the wonderful literary heritage of Oklahoma.

Archives and Records Center Building Expansion. I have had discussions with Director John Richard of the Oklahoma State Department of Central Services regarding a possible facility renovation to deal with the space shortage for temporary and permanent records of state government. Director Richard may include funding for this renovation in his capital request to the legislature. We will probably not know for some time if this request will be funded but at least it is being considered.

Tribal Conference Envisioning Committee. On November 1st, ODL hosted a meeting of the national advisory committee for the 2007 tribal conference to be held in Oklahoma City. Susan Feller has developed a wonderful group of individuals to provide suggestions on topics and speakers for this event. I have included the list of members following my report. As part of our Board meeting, I will have Susan Feller report on the progress of this and other projects she is developing.

Professional Development. I attended two national meetings this fall for state librarians. The first was the fall meeting of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) which was held in Little Rock, Arkansas. This was my first time in Little Rock and I found it to be a fun, colorful city located on the banks of a big river. One of the events was a dinner at the new Clinton Presidential Library. I have visited several other presidential libraries and have enjoyed every one of them. Each has some similarities and some unique aspects. I was elected Vice President/President Elect of COSLA at this meeting. Each office is a two year term so I will not be serving as president until 2008. It is a great honor to be asked to fill this role and I look forward to broadening my understanding of the national library scene.

My other professional development trip was to the fall meeting of the Western Council of State Libraries which was held in Honolulu, Hawaii. This was my first trip to Hawaii and we arrived just in time for the earthquake. It made for an exciting beginning to our meeting but everything was back to normal almost immediately. The Hawaii State Library is a fascinating blend of state and public library. It is the only state library to operate the public libraries in the state. The original Honolulu downtown library was a Carnegie building built in 1911. It has been renovated several times and is a beautiful building with murals in the children's room which are both historic and beautiful. We learned much about the future of technology and what it will mean for libraries with the help of our continuing education presenter Stephen Abram. He will be the keynote speaker at the OLA conference in the spring and is well deserving of his reputation as a library technology leader.