

**Director's Report
For the ODL Board Meeting of June 15, 2007**

Legislative Session. The Oklahoma legislature adjourned the 2007 legislative session on May 25, 2007 sine die. The budget negotiations between the governor and the legislature continued up till almost the last weeks of the session. ODL's appropriations were vetoed twice. The first time was in the general appropriations bill with all other state agencies and the second time was in an agency specific bill which was one of five which the governor vetoed because a budget agreement had not yet been reached on all appropriations. As a result, it was very good news when the budget agreement was reached. Although at the time I am writing our appropriations bill has not yet been signed by the governor, it is my expectation that there will be no further difficulties.

The FY2008 appropriation for ODL includes two increases in our funding. The first is an increase of \$425,000 for state aid to public libraries. Our budget request was for a much higher figure but this is a sizeable increase and will amount to approximately a 20-25% increase in the current amount of per capita state aid.

The other increase was approximately \$22,000 and provides the remaining funding for the mandated pay increase of last year. The legislature had appropriated enough last fiscal year to pay for the ten months when the pay increase was effective and this new money will pay for the remaining two months of the increase.

The governor has until June 9th to sign our appropriations bill.

Federal Funds. On April 23rd we received notification of the amount of funds we will receive from the Institute of Museum and Library Services for Library Services and Technology Act grants. The total amount for federal fiscal year 2007 is \$2,158,232. This is \$4,670 less than we received in FFY06. The formula for LSTA funding is partially based on population and the growth in Oklahoma's population was not as great as in some other states. Now that we have the final funding amount we are submitting for your approval additional proposals for LSTA grants.

Special Events. I attended the National Library Legislative Day in Washington, D.C. in early May. The Oklahoma delegation consisted of Marilyn Hinshaw from the Eastern Oklahoma District Library System, Donna Morris from the Metropolitan Library System, Richard Parker from the Tulsa City-County Library System, Jayme Seat from Jackson Elementary School in Norman, and me. It was an experienced group of library advocates who have all participated before and were ready to spread the word about the value of federal funds for libraries.

All seven Congressional offices were visited. In most offices, we spoke with the education liaison but we did meet with Congresswoman Mary Fallin and Congressman Frank Lucas in person. This year we included copies of our summer reading program

poster and trading cards which were great hits with the offices. Special recognition should go to Donna Morris who stayed till the end and visited all of the offices with me. Some members had to leave earlier in order to make their flights.

I participated in two special events at the Capitol in May. The first was the distribution of the new Oklahoma Almanac to legislators and elected officials. This year we included a copy of the Summer Reading Program poster, a set of the trading cards, the reading log, stickers, and bookmarks. Connie Armstrong, the editor of the Almanac and I did the distributions in the House of Representatives. It was hard work but also such fun because the publication is so appreciated and anticipated.

I also participated in the Jan Eric Cartwright Memorial Library open house ceremony which was attended by the Chief Justice of the Oklahoma Supreme Court, legislators, and staff working in the Capitol. I thoroughly enjoyed both events. I have to confess I miss working with the patrons the Cartwright Library serves. It was good to see some familiar faces as well as meeting new customers.

Hello & goodbye. Two long time Oklahoma library directors have retired and I was able to attend their retirement parties. Fran Cook has worked for the Grace Pickens Public Library in Holdenville since 1986 and has been director since August of 1990. Fran has been an example of how much can be done in a smaller library if you are willing to explore alternative funding opportunities. Over the years, Fran has been very successful in fund raising from individuals, corporations, and foundations. She has always seen what more could be done and has been able to persuade these funders to share her vision.

Mary Sherman has retired after forty-one years of service to the Pioneer Library System. Mary has been active in so many areas of both community and professional service. Her recognitions have been many including the Oklahoma Library Association's Distinguished Service Award, Meritorious Service Award, and as a Centennial Library Legend. Mary has been a mentor and role model for many women including myself. Mary had special interests in innovative services and globalization. The Pioneer Library System was the first library in Oklahoma to offer internet access to customers. In her retirement, Mary will be serving as a District Governor for Rotary in Oklahoma. I know she will continue to travel and to be an ambassador for the Pioneer Library System, libraries, and Oklahoma.

Duchess Bartmess' service on the ODL Board will conclude with the June meeting. Duchess has brought so much to her service in terms of knowledge of state government, love and appreciation of libraries, and intelligence. Her sense of fun and colorful dress were a bonus but much appreciated. I know from what others in state government told me of the champion role she played in funding for ODL and the libraries we serve. Duchess is an original and in a world too filled with people who follow the crowd, she is refreshing to my spirit.

Harlene Wills of Tahlequah is to be our new ODL Board member. Harlene has been an active member of the Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma (FOLIO) organization so she will come to us with a good understanding of the value of libraries. Harlene was confirmed by the Oklahoma Senate on May 21st.