

Director's Report

On the road. It has been a busy fall with lots of opportunities to get together with colleagues both in and out of state to discuss new library initiatives and see new buildings.

The Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) had its fall meeting in Jackson, Mississippi in October. It was a warm climate matched by warm hospitality from the Mississippi Library Commission. In addition to business meetings, we toured the new Mississippi Library Commission and the new State Archives buildings. I have a serious case of building envy for the Mississippi Library Commission which is both beautiful and extremely functional. At the conclusion of the meeting I became the president of COSLA so it was memorable for that reason as well. COSLA is made up of the state librarians in each state plus the territories so it is a challenging time. There are many new state librarians and many states are facing hard economic times. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as the president of a group of such outstanding individuals who are all working in their own states to help their citizens achieve a better quality of life.

The Public Library Directors Council held a retreat in Tulsa in October. We had the opportunity to tour three new library facilities including the Herman and Kate Kaiser Library located in LaFortune Park where former ODL Board Member, Glenda Kilmer, is the branch manager. It is a building which beautifully blends the inside and outside setting. My favorite item was an outdoor sculpture of a rabbit. We also visited the new library in Sperry and saw a new 420 seat auditorium which will focus on providing live performances at no charge to children and families. The remarkable thing about all these facilities is that they were totally built with donated funds. The group always has a round robin session to conclude the meeting where those present share success stories. It is inspiring to hear how small and large libraries do so much to help their communities.

Board meeting. We have a full agenda for our upcoming meeting. For state aid the good news is that all libraries applying met the requirements and qualified to receive state aid. Unfortunately the lack of new money and the growth in population means that the per capita amount decreased slightly. As you may remember, you approved a request to the state legislature to increase state aid by ten cents per capita beginning next year. There will be some new faces in the legislature next year thanks to the recent election and some new positions for those with whom we have worked in the past. The economic situation in Oklahoma continues to be stable unlike many other states so that again is good news. I look forward to seeing all of you at our December Board meeting.