

Director's Report

I find it difficult to believe that summer is almost over. Every summer I think it's going to be less busy than the fall and spring and am surprised when it doesn't happen. As you read the division reports following you'll see that a lot has been happening.

National Role for ODL. In June the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation held a workshop for those state libraries that had received a Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. The OkConnect project is the name of our BTOP grant. The workshop program was designed to build a community of practice or network of state library staff to inform them of similar projects and build capacity for sharing results. I moderated one of the panels on applications and Vicki Mohr was one of the presenters on our OkConnect video conferencing. The workshop was a launch of a grant by the Gates Foundation to the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) to develop a continuing education and support program to maximize the BTOP funding. I am serving as the project director for COSLA.

Another major initiative in which ODL is participating is also funded by the Bill and Gates Foundation. This is the project designed to create Benchmarks that result in continuous improvement and reinvestment in public access technology in public libraries. There are fourteen major library organizations involved in the initiative including the Urban Libraries Council, the American Library Association, the Public Libraries Association, and the state libraries of California, Oklahoma, and Texas. The International City County Managers Association is a lead partner as well. There have been a number of webinars as the initial version of the benchmarks is being developed. Bill Young and I attended an in person meeting with the Benchmarks Roundtable group in Chicago in early August.

The first version of the benchmarks is expected to be released at the end of September. They will be tested in eight locations including two sites in Oklahoma. The Miami Public Library and the Tulsa City-County Library are the Oklahoma sites. There will be training for pilot sites held in conjunction with the International City County Managers Association annual conference in September. I plan to attend the meeting to learn more about the training and support the pilot sites will need as the benchmarks are adopted. These pilot sites will be providing invaluable feedback on the implementation of the benchmarks.

An off shoot of the benchmarks project is the hosting of an event in Oklahoma City to get citizen feedback about their needs for access to the Internet. As part of the National Broadband plan developed by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, the Institute of Museum and Library Services was identified to work with public libraries and community based organizations to address the digital inclusion of citizens. Three cities will be hosting forums to invite reaction to the digital inclusion principles developed by the Institute of Museum and Library Services in response to this charge. Los Angeles, Oklahoma City and Bangor, Maine will be the three sites. The Metropolitan Library System Ronald B. Norrick Library will be the host library for the event. We have had three preliminary planning meetings with Donna Morris, director of MLS, and think it will be a wonderful opportunity to involve community members in

an important civic discussion that will help shape the future of Oklahoma City and the national discussions on this important topic. Susan Hildreth, director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, will be attending the meeting.

New ODL Board member. It is my pleasure to announce that Dr. Anne Hodges Morgan has been appointed by Governor Mary Fallin to fill the unexpired term of Shelly Pitt Wilson. Dr. Morgan has a tremendous background of experience in public service on state boards, nonprofit organizations, foundations, and libraries. Dr. Morgan has previously served on the Board of the Oklahoma Historical Society, the State Board of Education, and the State Regents for Higher Education. Dr. Morgan was named one of the one hundred Library Legends at the Oklahoma Library Association centennial banquet. She is currently serving on the Advisory Board of the Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma (FOLIO). Dr. Morgan will be attending our August Board meeting. Since her appointment occurred after the legislature adjourned, her confirmation by the Oklahoma State Senate will be postponed until next spring when they are in session again. It has been my pleasure to work with Dr. Morgan on several projects and I am thrilled to have her as Governor Fallin's first appointment to our Board.

Staff changes. As most of you remember, Karen Currie, my long time executive assistant retired at the end of May. After an overwhelming response to the position posting, Cindy Mooney was selected to be the new executive assistant to the director. Cindy has worked for the state for many years previously working at University Hospital, the Military Department, and the Insurance Department. She holds a Certified Personnel Professional certificate from the Oklahoma Office of Personnel Management. You'll meet Cindy at the Board meeting. I believe she is an excellent fit for our organization.

Other staff changes include some retirements. Marilyn Miller in Information Services retired on June 1st. Marilyn Jacobs Barragree at the Capitol branch retired on July 1st. This month we're having retirement parties for Linda Colbert in Archives and Records Management and Bill Petrie in Public Information. All of these are hard working contributing members of the ODL staff. We are losing a combined 76 years of institutional memory and experience as they retire. In most cases we won't be able to fill the positions due to the budget reductions. As our staff shrinks in size, the building seems quieter to me. I want to recognize the contributions our retiring employees have made and wish them a satisfying and rewarding retirement.