

TRUSTEE TALK

Issue No. 3

March, 2002

A publication of the Office of Library Development in the Oklahoma Department of Libraries

Library Budget Forecast

Last fall the Oklahoma Library Association and the Public Library Directors' Council identified new ways to improve public library services to their communities. One idea asked for \$6 million over three years to help public libraries buy picture books for children under five. Reading to toddlers and preschoolers stimulates their brain development, increases their vocabulary and helps them enter kindergarten ready to learn. Another need called for an increase in state money for public library construction because so many Oklahoma library buildings are not designed to support new technologies.

Unfortunately, it looks like these new ideas will have to wait for another year or two. Oklahoma's funds for fiscal year 2003 are down, primarily because of less natural gas revenues. Because of this, ODL has been asked to cut its 2002 budget by 2%. This cut will come out of unfilled staff positions. The Oklahoma House of Representatives has also warned ODL that next year's budget will be cut a minimum of 5% (about \$383,000), to perhaps a maximum of 15% (about \$ 1,149,000). No new projects will be considered.

This will be a difficult session, and legislators will have to make very hard funding decisions. ODL staff and administrators will do their best to continue to give Oklahoma's libraries the best service possible, and we appreciate your ongoing support.

Meet ODL's Deputy Director

Vicki Sullivan, a 17-year veteran with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, has been detailed to special duty as Deputy Director for the agency. In her new capacity, Sullivan will monitor the budgetary process, supervise the agency's information technology projects (including the statewide full-text databases for Oklahoma's libraries), and spearhead special projects for the agency.



Vicki Sullivan

Most recently, Sullivan served as head of the ODL Office of Government Information, the agency's largest administrative unit. In this position, she supervised the state and federal publication depositories, the State Archives, the Records Management program for state agencies, and the ODL Web Development Office.

In this Issue

- Fall Workshop Survey
- Public Library Construction
- ODL's New Deputy Director

LIBRARY BUILDINGS STILL PART OF THE “DREAM”

A few years ago the news media ran forecasts of an Internet-world that might not include public libraries. What has actually happened since then is very different. Internet computers have led to increased public library use. This trend is dramatically illustrated in Oklahoma communities that received the first round of state public library construction funds.



Warner , OK– Board member Betty Gardner and librarian Peggy Matthews proudly await the opening of the new Warner Public Library building.

The Warner Public Library was founded in the late 1980's in the small, rural, and economically-disadvantaged Muskogee County area. Visit it today and you will find several computer users, as well as children and adults using the whole range of library materials stuffed into 1250 square feet. Librarian Peggy Matthews says a large committee of Friends of the Library worked hard to convince their legislators, local businesses and everyday citizens that they had to have more space. In February they will move into 2500 square feet of beautiful new space and will convert the present library to a meeting room.

Buffalo, in northwest Oklahoma, is an old Oklahoma town facing challenges. The Buffalo Public Library was described by visiting economic development consultants as one of the leading community assets. The active library board and librarian Kathy Summers saw the state construction grant announcement as a signal to move forward. One of the few remaining main street businesses in Buffalo,

the library has now purchased the neighboring building and will double its size. Again, the goal is to accommodate computer customers and to have space for children's programs and community meetings.



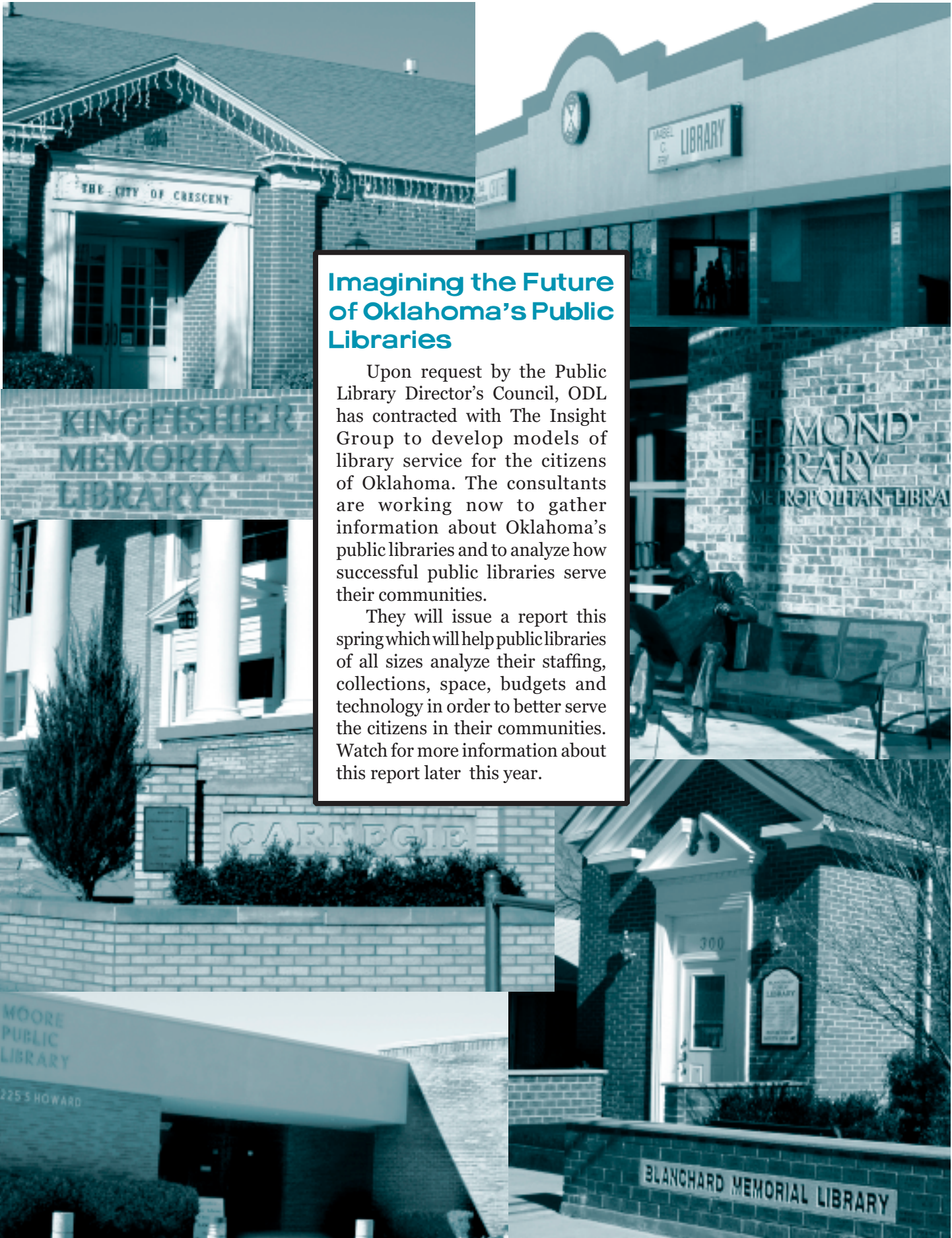
Buffalo, OK– Board president Kelly Sawyer and librarian Kathy Summers on Buffalo's main street.

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation is four-laning Highway 281 through Geary, a project that will take away the parking for the public library and city hall. Mayor Kenneth McKay, librarian Joyce Shawver and board all agreed this was the final straw and they must find better space. A former grocery store a block away is rapidly turning into a very attractive library/city hall with the state grant providing for new shelving and furniture.

Experience with these projects and the other state grant projects in Allen, Pawnee and Stratford prove that construction delays and underestimated costs can be a perfectly normal part of the building process. But any journey worth taking will have bumps along the road. These communities will enjoy improved services thanks to the grant program

A second round of state construction grants is currently underway.

**Does your community need
a better public library building?
Call ODL's building consultant,
Gary Phillips, at 800-522-8116
for help in assessing your
building needs.**



Imagining the Future of Oklahoma's Public Libraries

Upon request by the Public Library Director's Council, ODL has contracted with The Insight Group to develop models of library service for the citizens of Oklahoma. The consultants are working now to gather information about Oklahoma's public libraries and to analyze how successful public libraries serve their communities.

They will issue a report this spring which will help public libraries of all sizes analyze their staffing, collections, space, budgets and technology in order to better serve the citizens in their communities. Watch for more information about this report later this year.

POSCERV

A Word for Library Trustees

Those of you who attended one of the Libraries for the Future workshops for trustees in Norman or Altus last October may remember **POSCERV**. Ellen Miller, president of the Kansas Library Trustee Association and a management consultant, used **POSCERV** to summarize the main points of her presentation:

- **Planning.** Trustees need to help their libraries improve their services to the community by developing a 3 or 4 year plan with specific goals to achieve.

- **Operations.** Day-to-day operation of the library should be left primarily to the library director and staff. Only about 20% of board meetings should be spent reviewing operations.

- **Staffing.** Trustees should identify and nurture the best library staff possible.

- **Communications.** Both internal – communicating with and listening to the library director and staff; and external – representing the library, its successes and needs, to the community.

- **Evaluation or return on investment.** Trustees should always be asking what the community is getting for its money. Are citizens getting the best services possible?

- **Resources or money.** Good libraries require money, and effective advocacy by trustees is an important part of getting the money needed.

- **Vision.** What is the difference that your library is trying to make in the community?

Pat Owens, another Libraries for the Future presenter who attended the workshops in Tulsa and Atoka, packaged her ideas for trustees as commandments. Pat, retired from the Connecticut State Library

and now a library consultant, listed these ten commandments of being a good public library trustee advocate:

1. Have a working knowledge of your public library's services and programs.
2. Be familiar with your library funding sources.
3. Know who the key decision-makers are in your community.
4. Establish clear rules and responsibilities for the Friends of the Library and support their work.
5. Attend civic, educational, and community functions and events.
6. Become familiar with local, state and federal existing and proposed library legislation.
7. Establish a continuing education budget for trustees.
8. Adopt a Library Board Members' Code of Ethics.
9. Develop an annual advocacy plan.
10. Believe in the value of partnerships and collaborations.

If you attended one of the five October workshops, you enjoyed great food, interesting presenters and good conversation with other library trustees....

....To help us plan this fall's trustee workshops, please take a few minutes to answer the survey on the next page.

In order to help us plan workshops that address your concerns, please take a few minutes to answer the following questions:

Topic to Address: Here are possible topics for future trustee workshops. Please rank them in order of importance with 1 being the most important to you and 6 being the least:

- _____ Effective communication skills – how to talk and how to listen.
- _____ Legislative process – how it works and how you can influence it.
- _____ Planning for Results – a planning process for libraries.
- _____ Proactive community relations.
- _____ Skills to run productive library board meetings.
- _____ Other: _____

Practical Details: Please select the one best answer for each of the following questions. In no case select more than two.

I prefer that workshops for trustees be held in the following month:

- | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-----------|
| _____ | April | _____ | July | _____ | September |
| _____ | May | _____ | August | _____ | October |

The best day of the week for me to attend a workshop is:

- | | | | | | |
|-------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|-------------------|
| _____ | Monday | _____ | Wednesday | _____ | Friday |
| _____ | Tuesday | _____ | Thursday | _____ | Saturday / Sunday |

The best time of day for me to attend a workshop is:

- | | | | |
|-------|-----------------|-------|----------------|
| _____ | Morning | _____ | Late afternoon |
| _____ | Early afternoon | _____ | Evening |

Serving lunch or dinner at the workshop is:

- _____ very important to me.
- _____ somewhat important to me.
- _____ nice but I could live without it.
- _____ something I really don't care about.

Primarily because of cost, ODL cannot offer numerous regional workshops with a national presenter. So please tell us if you prefer:

- _____ driving longer distances to hear a national presenter.
- _____ driving shorter distances (no more than 75 miles) and hearing local or regional presenters.
- _____ alternating each year between regional workshops with local presenters and central workshops with a national speaker.

Your Library's Name: _____

Please fax or mail this survey to: Ginny Dietrich

Oklahoma Department of Libraries
200 N.E. 18th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3298
Fax: 525-7804 (OKC area)
800-397-8116 (statewide)

Thank you for your help!

Come to Tulsa!

The Oklahoma Library Association will host its Annual Conference at the Adams Mark Hotel in Tulsa from Wednesday, April 17, to Friday, April 19, 2002. More than 500 librarians, library staff, friends and trustees come to learn, meet other library people, and have fun. You're certainly invited!

Here are some of the programs being planned of particular interest to library trustees:

Speak Up for Your Library! Gerry Baker with the Oklahoma City Community Foundation will discuss effective ways to be a library advocate with the media, legislators and the public. Wednesday, April 17, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Before the Crisis: Building Grass Roots Support for Your Library. Cecile Richards will be the keynote speaker at the Opening General Session, describing how libraries can be more effective at forming advocacy groups prior to a crisis, rather than in reaction to challenges. Thursday, April 18, from 9 to 10:45 a.m.

Legislative Luncheon. David Averill, the associate editor of the *Tulsa World*, and Oliver Delaney, OLA's legislative liaison, will discuss upcoming legislative issues impacting libraries. Thursday, April 18, from noon to 1:30 p.m.

Friends, Trustees, Foundations – Working Together to Build Libraries. Pat Wagner, a national speaker on leadership and management, will present this program. From 1999 to 2001, Pat has presented 391 programs in 27 states, and is known for good-humored and practical approaches to library concerns. Thursday, April 18, from 1 to 4 p.m.

Certification Reception. Relax and enjoy a glass of wine and some refreshments as you listen to new ideas for public libraries presented by librarians who attended the Public Library Association's National Conference in Phoenix. Thursday, April 18, from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m.

All Conference Event. Enjoy good food and be entertained by Gene McFall performing as Will Rogers. Thursday, April 18 from 7 to 9:30 p.m.

OK History. Dee Ann Ray, director of the Western Plains Library System, will share her enthusiasm for Oklahoma history, and libraries will consider their role in Oklahoma's upcoming Centennial. Friday, April 19, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

FOLIO Foundation Grants. Learn what's available and how to apply for grants from the Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma. Friday, April 19, from 9:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Conference Banquet. William Bernhardt, author of fifteen books and named by *Library Journal* as the "master of the courtroom drama", will talk about his work. Friday, April 19, 7 to 9:30 p.m.

These are just a few of the many programs that will be offered at the OLA Conference. If you would like more information, please contact Kay Boies, OLA's executive director, at 405-348-0506 or kboies@coxinet.net.

Trustee Talk is a publication of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries designed specifically for public library trustees. Because Oklahoma's public libraries serve diverse communities, Oklahoma's library boards can be either a governing or an advisory board and may serve a large system, a metropolitan area, or a rural community. Therefore, some information in *Trustee Talk* may not be useful to you and your library. However we hope that everyone will find something useful in each issue.

If you have questions on anything you have read, please contact your regional consultant at the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. If you would like to suggest topics for future issues, please contact Ginny Dietrich, editor, at ODL, 800-522-8116 or gdietch@oltn.odl.state.ok.us.

Check out ODL's website at: www.odl.state.ok.us

This publication, is issued by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries as authorized by 65 O.S. 1991, section 3-110. 1,225 copies have been prepared and distributed at a cost of \$958.11. Paid for with state and federal funds under the Library Services and Technology Act. Copies have been deposited with the Oklahoma Publications Clearinghouse in the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. 2/2002.