

Letter To Libraries Online

An Electronic Newsletter



Volume 14, Issue 6

June 2004

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LIBRARY BOARD NEWS

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STATE LIBRARY BOARD TO CONSIDER 05-07 BUDGET REQUEST

At their meeting on June 18th at the State Library in Salem, the State Library Board will consider recommendations for their 2005-07 budget request to Governor Kulongoski. The Board Budget Committee has been working since January on the recommendation. It includes a request to

restore funding for the Ready to Read Grant program to the \$1 per child funding level, and funding to improve staffing for Talking Book and Braille Services using the interest from the TBABS endowment fund. The Board will also hear recommendations from the LSTA Advisory Council concerning grant project proposals for 2005 and recommendations from the TBABS Advisory Council about the use of donation funds in 2004-05. The meeting will be held, beginning at 9:30, in the Second Floor Conference room at the Library. An open forum will be held at approximately 10:30. Anyone may address the Board at the open forum.

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT NEWS
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LIBRARIES HAVE DIFFICULT TIME WITH DOUBLE MAJORITY

At press time the Stayton Public Library appears to have eked out a win in the May 18th election, but two other library funding levies were defeated. The four-year local option levy for the City of Stayton would provide funding for the library, swimming pool and parks programs, and would replace a levy that will expire next year. Voters approved the measure by 55% to 45%. At first it appeared that the election would fall just short of the 50% turnout requirement, but on May 27th, the Salem Statesman Journal reported that the measure might have met the turnout requirement by just a few ballots.

The local option levy election for Washington County Cooperative Library Services to restore and maintain library services in WCCLS libraries won by 52% to 48%, but only achieved a 43% turnout. This was the second loss for a local option levy in Washington County. It has not been determined whether WCCLS will try again in November, when a double majority is not required.

In Josephine County, library supporters had to launch a last minute petition drive to convince county commissioners to put a local option levy on the May ballot. But the measure lost by 48% to 52%. The turnout also fell short at 46%.

LSTA PROJECTS IN OREGON

The Oregon State Library currently receives \$2,071,028 from Library Service and Technology Act funding through Institute of Museum and Library Services. The funds are used according to a five year plan developed by the library community in 2002. A copy of the plan is available at: <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/lsta.htm>. Ever wonder what projects were funded? Take a look at a summary list of grants, competitive and non-competitive, as well as charts showing the funding distribution by the goals of the five year plan. The list is at: <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/Lsta.pdf>. We are in the process of posting electronic versions of proposals, applications, and evaluations on the main LSTA Web page under Recent LSTA Projects in Oregon - Short Descriptions of Competitive Grant Projects. If the project you are interested in does not have electronic versions available, please call Library Development at 503-378-2112 x222 and we

will be happy to send you information.

MAKING OREGON'S PAST ACCESSIBLE

One of the promising LSTA projects underway is the digitization of paper Oregonian indexes. Led by Richard Bear and Charles Hixson at the University of Oregon Library, a dedicated crew of students turned to digitizing the Oregonian from 1850-1987 after successfully finishing the Oregon Daily Emerald. Since beginning in February, they have indexed 124,796 records and 22,000 obituaries. Working in reverse date order, they are now working on the 1970s. The project incorporates indexing records from the Multnomah County Library as well as the University. When the project is finished, it will be available for searching on the Web. Progress is charted daily at: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/govdocs/indexing/inventory.html>. The project newsletter is at: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/govdocs/indexing/news.html>.

OREGON LIBRARIES NETWORK (L-NET) UPDATE

If you haven't yet visited the streamlined L-net Web site, take a few minutes for a quick tour Por a longer exploration -- at <http://www.oregonlibraries.net/>. You'll find comprehensive information on Oregon's online collaborative reference service, and a listing of the multi-type libraries supporting the statewide service. (The Lake Oswego Public Library and West Linn Public Library are the latest libraries to join L-net as service providers).

On the Home page, prominent buttons initiate live chat sessions or queries by e-mail. The persistent left side menu provides links to service hours, libraries actively providing service, and the privacy policy. Under the About L-net link are answers to such questions as Who am I talking to?, What can I ask?, and Who can use this service?

There are separate areas for libraries and for schools. The information for libraries includes links for the Advisory Board, joining and promoting L-net, and second level reference (with a form to enter questions). The schools link leads to a description of the service, use guidelines, and a downloadable brochure.

If your library is considering actively participating in L-net as a service provider, visit <http://www.oregonlibraries.net/join/> to learn about expectations for library participants as well as information about the process to join.

Do you want to link the L-net reference service from your Web page? The L-net logo is available at <http://www.oregonlibraries.net/promote/> for downloading, to provide your patrons with a live link to this statewide 24/7 service.

For more information contact Pam Horan, pam.horan@state.or.us, 503-378-2112 ext. 224.

OREGON STATEWIDE DATABASE LICENSING PROGRAM UPDATE

In May the Advisory Committee (SDLAC) for the Statewide Database Licensing Program met to evaluate and score the database packages submitted by vendors. SDLAC has made a recommendation for a full-text general periodicals database to Oregon's Department of Administrative Services Procurement Office (DAS), which will negotiate the license with the proposed vendor. The vendor for the new statewide contract will be announced when negotiations are successfully concluded. In addition, the Advisory Committee recommended re-soliciting the statewide newspaper database; the re-solicitation process for the Oregonian will begin in summer 2004 and conclude in spring 2005. The current contract with NewsBank extends through summer 2005.

SDLAC members have worked very hard on behalf of all Oregon libraries, devoting their time and expertise to obtain the best full text general periodicals database at reasonable cost for the state. Committee members were assisted by volunteer professional reviewers, who took time to put proposed database packages to the test and to score them on usability.

Committee members and reviewers deserve the thanks and appreciation of the entire library community for a difficult job that was very well done.

For additional information on the Statewide Database Licensing Program see the State Library Web page at <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/osdlp/index.html>.

NEW SDLAC REPRESENTATIVE

Amy Blossom from Jackson County Library System's Ashland Branch was appointed to the SDLAC by the LSTA Advisory Council at its May 14 meeting at the Hood River County Library. Amy will represent public libraries serving over 100,000 service population. The list of SDLAC members may be found linked from the State Library Web page <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/osdlp/members.html>.

For more information contact Pam Horan, pam.horan@state.or.us, 503-378-2112 ext. 224.

OregonHelps! WINS PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

Many public libraries in Oregon have linked OregonHelps! from their Web pages, tacked up posters, made its bookmarks available, or referred users to its Web site as a place for patrons to quickly (about 10 minutes) and anonymously assess whether they might be eligible for a number of government social service programs.

So it was good news to learn that the OregonHelps! Web site has been recognized in an international forum as the winner of the 2004 Stockholm Challenge Award for information technology innovations, taking top honors in the e-government category. This year's competition featured 900 entities from 107 countries representing many different sectors of the global economy, including academia, business, government, and non-profit organizations. OregonHelps! was chosen for

its capacity to "help the poor and unemployed find official information on-line on subjects addressing their needs."

OregonHelps! (<http://www.oregonhelps.org/>) provides users with information on 27 local, state, and federal social service programs, ranging from the Food Stamp Program to the Oregon Health Plan and hundreds of Oregonians visit the web site each week.

For more information contact Pam Horan, pam.horan@state.or.us, 503-378-2112 ext. 224.

E-RATE TECHNOLOGY PLANS: TIMING AND APPROVAL

Technology plans are required as the first step toward the application process for the E- rate program for all services except Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS). Technology plans must be initiated by E-rate applicants prior to filing the Form 470 (Description of Services Requested), according to the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD).

In Oregon, public libraries should submit their proposed technology plans to the State Library for review and approval (contact Pam Horan at pam.horan@state.or.us); sending your plan electronically speeds process. SLD has stated that technology plans must be written by the time/date the Form 470 is filed, and approved by the date the Form 486 is filed or the date services start, whichever is earlier. Funding may be in jeopardy when a tech plan is not approved by the date services start or when the tech plan does not cover the entire funding year.

The SLD recommends that technology plans cover a period of three years, and requires that five criteria be included in every plan as core elements of successful school and library technology initiatives: 1. The plan must establish clear goals and a realistic strategy for using telecommunications and information technology to improve education or library services; 2. The plan must have a professional development strategy to ensure that staff know how to use these new technologies to improve education or library services; 3. The plan must include an assessment of the telecommunication services, hardware, software, and other services that will be needed to improve education or library services; 4. The plan must provide for a sufficient budget to acquire and support the non-discounted elements of the plan: the hardware, software, professional development, and other services that will be needed to implement the strategy; and 5. The plan must include an evaluation process that enables the school or library to monitor progress toward the specified goals and make mid-course corrections in response to new More information about the E-rate program, technology plans, eligible services and the application process are linked from the State Library Web page at <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/grants.html>. For more information contact Pam Horan, pam.horan@state.or.us, 503-378-2112 ext. 224.

OTHER LIBRARY NEWS

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CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE UMATILLA INDIAN RESERVATION
FOCUS GROUP

The Oregon State Library and the Tam̓stslikt Cultural Institute (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation) hosted a focus group on May 13, 2004 to assist in developing the Oregon Collaborative Project which aims to improve collaboration between tribal libraries and other libraries in the state. Twenty-seven individuals participated from tribal cultural centers, museums and libraries, from public and academic libraries and archives, and from museums and archives in Oregon. The State Library appreciates the enthusiasm displayed by those who attended and looks forward to working with the group as it works through the summer to plan a one-two day conference in October 2004. More information about the project will soon be available from the State Library website.

LIBRARY WORKSHOPS, CONFERENCES, AND CLASSES

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TRAIN-THE-TRAINER WORKSHOP JUNE 7-8TH

The first of two summer train-the-trainer workshops will be held Monday June 7th and Tuesday June 8th. The intensive workshop is limited to twelve participants, six from Oregon and six from Washington, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Training Program grant. There will be a second workshop tentatively scheduled for Thursday-Friday July 23-24. Although the June workshop is filled, there is still space in July. Contact Pam Horan if you are interested in being a participant.

More detailed information about the workshops, is linked through the State Library Web page at <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/Gates/grants.html>.

REGISTER NOW! PUBLIC LIBRARIAN TECHNOLOGY TRAINING INSTITUTES

Registration is open for twelve Public Librarian Technology Training Institutes to be held in Oregon and Washington starting in June. The three-day institutes will be free to public library staff and will focus on support for public access computing. Each Institute is limited to twenty participants per day, so be sure to register early. Institutes allow for different staff members to attend successive days and training in either state; separate registrations forms must be completed for each day.

Curriculum overview for the three-day Institutes:

Day 1 -- Computer and Internet Issues for Public Library Staff (3 modules): Internet Explorer: Tips and Tricks to Help You Use Your Browser More Effectively Internet Access: Policy Issues for Librarians Teaching Computer Skills to Groups and Individuals Additional

information and registration

<http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/training/trainingView.aspx?event=167&audience=lib>.

Day 2 -- Web Design: Web Page Creation Basics

Additional information and registration

<http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/training/trainingView.aspx?event=168&audience=lib>.

Day 3: The Accidental Computer and Network Technician (3 modules):

Basic networking Network and desktop troubleshooting and security
Keeping Technology Skills Current: Free & low-cost Solutions Additional
information and registration

<http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/training/trainingView.aspx?event=168&audience=lib>.

The Registration information is linked from the Washington State
Library Web page at

<http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/training/gates.aspx>.

The Oregon State and Washington State Libraries collaborated in the
planning and design of the Institutes, and in arranging training and
locations. The training will be done by Bibliographical Center for
Research (BCR), staff from the Washington State Library, and trainers
formerly with the Gates Foundation's Library Program, and assisted by
State Library staff.

In addition to free trainings sessions, Oregon participants will
receive a stipend to use for travel expenses, staff substitutes, etc.
to be reimbursed after the training. Details about the Institutes are
linked from the State Library's web page at
<http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/Gates/grants.html>.

The Institutes are funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's
Training Program grants and, in part, by Library Services and
Technology Act (LSTA) grant funds.

For more information contact Pam Horan, pam.horan@state.or.us,
503-378-2112 ext. 224.

PS. (FROM THE STATE LIBRARIAN)
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At ALA Legislative Day I ran into a former colleague who recently moved
up from being head of reference services to being a library director. I
asked her how she enjoyed being a director and she quipped, "Well,
reference is dead •o I had to become a director!"

Is reference service really dying? If you looked at statistics for U.S.
public libraries from the National Center for Education Statistics, you
would see that in 1990, (in those blissful pre-Web days of yore,)
public libraries in the U.S. handled .92 reference questions per capita
population served. In 2001 (the latest national statistics available)

that figure was not down dramatically, as you might think. It was up, actually, to 1.1 reference transactions per capita.

But then "reference transactions" is a notoriously squishy statistic encompassing nearly everything that happens at a library service desk. The official definition used by most libraries excludes directional questions and questions about library hours and policies, but that's about it for exclusions. So just the fact that many public and academic libraries are seeing more foot traffic than a decade ago would lead to higher "reference transactions."

If I were to speculate on what has happened in the past decade to the market for information for ordinary citizens and students, I would say that the library's share of the total market has shrunk, but that the market has experienced a huge expansion fueled mostly by Google. Google has made millions of people into information consumers, who in the past would never have bothered to ask a librarian anyway. So today we have a much smaller share of a much, much larger market, but we are not really doing any worse than we did ten years ago.

If we want to look on the bright side of this situation, it might be that these newly minted information consumers will be more apt to use our services than if Google had never introduced them to the value of getting your facts straight.

Are there other ways that Google can be our friend? OCLC is conducting an interesting experiment to try and find out. You may have heard about the Open WorldCat pilot that has created links from Google to library catalogs of OCLC member libraries. The idea is that people doing Google searches will stumble onto the fact that their local library might just have a book that has the information they need.

I decided to give it a try. I typed "salmon habitat recovery" into the Google search box and retrieved 125,000 hits. Hoping to narrow it down a bit, I added "library books" to my search terms. This reduced the hits to only 6,960, and better yet, on the first screen was a link entitled "Find a Library: Pacific Salmon Recovery Act." Clicking on the link took me to a screen in WorldCat. When I put in my zip code, a list of nearby libraries, including the State Library, appeared that held a federal document reporting on the Pacific Salmon Recovery Act. Kind of slick, but what else turned up? Not much, I'm afraid. The next "Find a Library" link didn't turn up until I was seven screens in. In paging through those seven screens, I found a lot of information on salmon habitat recovery (including a nice salmon bibliography produced by Chemeketa Community College Library!). And for much of the information there, I wouldn't have to go to a library to get it. That's the whole point of Google Pinstant gratification. So there may be a disconnect between the desires of Google users and what Open WorldCat delivers that will be hard to overcome.

I still think the best strategy for libraries to grow our market share on the Web is to become an important supplement to Google for the less casual, more serious information consumer. This is what we have tried to do at the State Library with our website for state government, and I

know most of our academic libraries and our larger public libraries in Oregon have adopted a similar strategy. We are never going to beat Google at their game. They are always going to be the McDonalds, KFC, Taco Bell, and Pizza Hut (combined!) of information. If we can really satisfy the more discriminating palate, we will be doing just fine. -- Jim Schepcke

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LETTER TO LIBRARIES ONLINE (ISSN 1059-3195) is published monthly by the Oregon State Library. Editorial offices: LTLO, Oregon State Library, 250

Winter Street NE, Salem,
OR 97301-3950. Editor: Robin Speer, 503-378-4243, ext. 221 or e-mail
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