

# Letter To Libraries Online

An Electronic Newsletter



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February

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LIBRARY BOARD NEWS  
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## STATE LIBRARY BOARD MEETS ON FEBRUARY 20TH

The State Library Board of Trustees will meet on February 20, 2004, at the State Library in Salem. The Board will consider a request for unprogrammed LSTA funds from the Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission to

undertake a grant project in 2004. The project would involve selecting the 100 greatest Oregon books and developing an exhibit to coincide with the State Library Centennial in 2005. This idea for the project was conceived by the State Library Board's Centennial Planning Committee and the OCHC was invited to partner with the Library on this project. A traveling exhibit of the 100 greatest books will also be developed to travel to libraries throughout Oregon after 2005. The Board will also hear a report on Oregon Benchmark #38 that measures the percentage of Oregonians who have adequate public library service. Data recently submitted by public libraries was used to assess the Benchmark for 2003. The meeting will begin at 9:30 in the Second Floor Conference Room.

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT NEWS

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LIBRARY BENCHMARK SEES DROP IN 2003

How well are Oregonians served by public libraries?

Not as well as we might like. The State Library assesses annually how well Oregon public libraries are meeting "minimum service criteria," and the extent to which every Oregonian is served by a public library. We do this as part of the Oregon Benchmarks process. The Oregon Benchmarks are the state's long term goals for improving our state. The percentage of Oregonians served by an adequate public library dropped 2% from 2002. This was primarily due to four additional libraries making the list of libraries not meeting minimum service criteria. Given the fiscal situation of 2003 this is not surprising, but it is still disappointing. Our goal for 2010 is 99% of Oregonians served by an adequate public library. As of 2003 we are at 85%.

The "minimum service criteria" are: (1) The library is legally established and makes basic services available to citizens within its tax-supporting service area without charge; (2) The library is open a minimum of 20 hours per week; (3) Staff consists of one paid staff person per 4,000 persons in service area or 0.5 FTE, which ever is greater and populations over 10,000 must have a full-time paid professional librarian (with a Master of Library Science degree); (4) Collection is 5,000 books or one volume per capita, which ever is greater; (5) Children's programming is provided.

As of 2003, approximately 9.3% of the total population of Oregon reside in areas where they are not taxed to support public library service. Another 6% of Oregonians have service from a library not meeting the minimum service criteria. For more information see the latest Oregon Benchmarks Report posted on the Library Development website:  
<http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/index.html>.

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 2004 FOCUS  
ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS INSTITUTE

Every two years the Oregon State Library presents a three-day Institute designed to provide a foundation of knowledge in the principles and

practices of service to library service to children and young adults. Registration is limited and the target audience is staff responsible for youth services from small public libraries, who have no graduate level education in librarianship. We're particularly interested in participants from libraries who offer limited library services to youth and who will increase those services after attendance at the Institute. Tentative dates for the 2004 Institute are September 12- 15th at Namaste Retreat Center in Wilsonville. Please watch for more information or contact MaryKay Dahlgreen, marykay.dahlgreen@state.or.us 503-378-2112, ext. 239.

OREGON CONNECTIONS TO THE ALA AWARD WINNERS  
ANNOUNCED AT THE ALA MIDWINTER CONFERENCE

Beloved Oregon author Ursula K. LeGuin is the recipient of the Margaret A. Edwards Award honoring her lifetime contribution to young adult readers. The award is administered by YALSA and sponsored by School Library Journal.

Cuba 15 by Portland author, Nancy Osa, was one of two Pura Belpre Author Award Honor Books. The Belpre Awards are administered by ALSC and REFORMA.

Ruth Allen of the Multnomah County Library was a member of the 2004 Michael L. Printz Award Committee and Nell Colburn, Multnomah County Library, and MaryKay Dahlgreen, Oregon State Library, were members of the 2004 Caldecott Medal. Martha Keough Flotten of Portland was a member of the Mildred L. Batchelder Award Committee.

LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT GUIDELINES OUT FOR  
FFY2005 GRANT CYCLE

Got a great idea for a community literacy program? Outreach? Continuing education? Use of technology? Perhaps the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant program is for you! The application packet for FY2005 grant proposals has been mailed out and is also available on the web through: <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/lsta.htm>. The LSTA program uses a two-step grant process. Short proposals are due April 16. The LSTA Advisory Council will invite some applicants to develop the proposal further in a grant application that will be due August 13, 2004. Ideas need to support the Oregon Library Services and Technology Act Five-Year State Plan 2003-2008, available at <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/lsta.htm>. We welcome calls to talk over grant ideas, or find out about similar grants that may have been made in previous years. Contact Ann Reed at (503) 378-2112 x.254.

PRELIMINARY PUBLIC LIBRARY STATISTICS ON THE WEB

The preliminary public library statistics are on the Web in downloadable Excel 2000 format at: <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/publibstats.html>. If you need a customized spreadsheet, or have a data correction to report, please contact Val Vogt at [val.t.vogt@state.or.us](mailto:val.t.vogt@state.or.us), 503-378-2112, ext. 222.

## OREGON HELPS UPDATE

Oregon Helps (<http://www.oregonhelps.org>), the Web based calculator that was designed to help Oregon citizens identify social services and other support for which they might be eligible, recently broadened its scope in the area of senior services (<http://www.oregonhelps.org/go>). Many libraries have linked Oregon Helps from their Web page as a resource for their patrons. Currently over 2,000 citizens a month who in need complete the Oregon Helps interview process, making use of the resources and support they find there. If it's your first visit to the site, try the tutorial (in English, Spanish, Russian, and Vietnamese)!

Oregon Helps has recently received recognition for its innovation and service. In 2003 a panel of experts in the area of government technology innovation awarded Oregon Helps a Gracie (<http://www.oregonhelps.org/awards>). Most past winners have been federal programs, so it is thrilling that this small state/county program competed and emerged a winner.

In 2003 Oregon Helps also won the Pegasus Award for its public service announcement. This competition was created to recognize educational and governmental video content creators.

Finally, Oregon Helps has been selected by an international jury as a finalist for the 2004 Stockholm Challenge in the category of E-government. The Stockholm Challenge began in 1993 and is considered one of the premier international awards for municipal information technology. This year, the Stockholm Challenge received over 900 entries from 107 countries [www.challenge.stockholm.se/about\\_right.asp](http://www.challenge.stockholm.se/about_right.asp). Oregon Helps is one of 24 finalists from 16 countries. Seven finalists are from the US <http://www.challenge.stockholm.se/finalists.asp?Ar=2003&key=39KV85332>. Winners for all categories will be announced May 13, 2004 at the Awards ceremony at Stockholm City Hall. Contact Pam Horan for more information, [pam.horan@state.or.us](mailto:pam.horan@state.or.us), 503-378-2112, ext. 224.

## E-RATE APPLICATION DEADLINE

The deadline for Form 471, the Services Ordered and Certification Form, is February 4, 2004 at 11:59 p.m. EST. Public Libraries that file applications after that time likely will not receive E-rate discount in Funding Year 2004. Form 471 is the actual request for funding and is used to calculate the discount percentage to which the applicant is entitled.. The Form 471 also lists the individual funding requests, which must be separated by service category and service provider. In general, the E-rate discount is based on the percent of the local school district population eligible for the National School Lunch Program. For details about the program see the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) Web page at <http://www.sl.universalservice.org/>. Contact Pam Horan for more information, [pam.horan@state.or.us](mailto:pam.horan@state.or.us), 503-378-2112, ext. 224.

## OREGON STATEWIDE DATABASE LICENSING PROGRAM UPDATE

The Statewide Database Licensing Program Advisory Committee (SDLAC) and

the State Library (OSL) have continued to work on the transition of statewide database administration to OSL. In addition, they have developed a Request for Proposal (RFP) that will result in a new contract for a full text general periodicals database. The RFP is scheduled to be issued in February.

For details about the program, including a list of Advisory Committee members and meeting minutes, see the Statewide Database Licensing Program Web page  
<http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/osdlp/index.html>.

Although there have been a number of training opportunities for both EBSCO products and the Oregonian recently, the State Library plans to arrange additional training sessions focused toward libraries that are new subscribers. Watch for announcements. Contact Pam Horan for more information, [pam.horan@state.or.us](mailto:pam.horan@state.or.us), 503-378-2112, ext. 224.

OTHER LIBRARY NEWS  
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TBABS TRANSITIONS TO NEW AUTOMATION SYSTEM

To an avid reader, what could be worse than two weeks without access to books? Well, for a librarian, the challenges of migrating data to a new automation system and the accompanying trials vie for top honor.

After two years of planning, bidding, and preparation, the new KLAS automation system will be installed at Talking Book & Braille Services (TBABS) in early February. OSL and public library staff who assist TBABS participants or their family members will have a greatly improved web access to help patrons browse the catalog and order books, <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/tbabs/>. Funds for the automation system came entirely from private donations.

Please note that TBABS will not ship any books February 2-6, 2004, and only a limited number during the week of February 9, 2004, while staff learns the new procedures. Regular service should resume on February 17, though the system will likely need fine tuning for several weeks.

While TBABS is notifying its participants in advance and encouraging them to stock up on books, public library staff may field additional calls from TBABS participants who are eager to check out books. As always, TBABS staff can provide brochures, applications, and even a speaker to train staff on the program. For information, contactCarolynn Avery, 503-378-4243 x 269 or [Carolynn.m.Avery@state.or.us](mailto:Carolynn.m.Avery@state.or.us).

LIBRARIAN JOINS GOVERNMENT RESEARCH AND ELECTRONIC  
SERVICES TEAM

Alice Stewart is joining the GRES team this month. She will fill our current librarian vacancy and bring the research team back up to full FTE strength in this important customer service area.

Alice joins our staff as a seasoned research librarian. She brings a

strong commitment to customer service as well as relevant skills and knowledge acquired from her previous position as Urban Librarian for the Johnson County Library in Kansas. In this position Alice developed and provided extensive research support and information services to local government and social services agencies located in the county. It would have been difficult for us to find a better fit for this position. Welcome Alice!

FUND DEVELOPMENT NEWS

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WHAT ARE YOUR FUNDRAISING TRAINING NEEDS?

Does your group need to learn how to run a capital campaign, recruit board members, create a case statement, or make a personal ask for a contribution? Raising private funds is easier if your volunteers understand the most effective methods.

A small LSTA planning grant will help identify fund development training needs by gathering information from library staff and volunteers across Oregon. This winter and spring OSL will be organizing regional meetings or teleconferences and distributing surveys to learn your needs and preferences. Survey results will be used to establish appropriate fund development training, with the goal of creating a cohesive statewide fund development network. Be sure that your voice is heard. To be included in the survey contact her at 503-378-2112 x 264 or Kathryn.Thomas@state.or.us.

PS. (FROM THE STATE LIBRARIAN)

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From the preliminary Oregon public library statistics for 2002-03 that we posted to our website last month, it appears that public library circulation continues to soar. This, in spite of the funding difficulties that a number of public libraries are struggling with. For the first time, per capita circulation from all Oregon public libraries surpassed 14. When I started work at the State Library in 1986, the number was less than half of that. The new number will probably continue to put us in second place in circulation per capita in the U.S., but we are gaining on the leader, Ohio.

A number of factors seem to be accounting for the increase. All the great new library buildings are certainly a major factor. Another factor might be that it is much easier to renew a book than it used to be, and a renewal counts as another circulation. For example, I can go to my CCRLS catalog on the Web, check one little box, and renew all the books that can be renewed -- a pretty convenient thing to do when your books are all due and you can't get to the library to return them. The downside of this is that books probably are staying out longer and libraries need more copies to satisfy the demand.

Public librarians tell me that the growing popularity of libraries as a place to get audiovisual materials is a big factor in driving circulation to higher and higher levels. AV collections have improved

dramatically in most libraries in recent years, and the public has discovered that the library is a great place for music CDs, videos, DVDs and audiobooks.

The popularity of audiobooks may be growing faster than any other format in public libraries. The audiobook industry as a whole is poised for a real takeoff in the next few years. I was fortunate to be at a meeting last May in which the President of the Audiobook Publishers Association, Eileen Hutton, made a presentation. She told us that the biggest news in her industry is that by 2005 all new cars will have CD players capable of playing MP3 CDs. In addition, her industry has developed a new MP3 standard, so that in a year or so you can expect to see all audiobooks on MP3 CDs, which have the capacity to hold an entire unabridged audiobook. The audiobook industry is very much geared toward commuters. Hutton said that 97 million Americans drive alone to work everyday, and that in 2001, commuters were stuck in traffic an average of 62 hours per year, hence the huge popularity of audiobooks with commuters.

Hutton predicted that when all cars come equipped to easily play audiobooks, their popularity will accelerate and many more titles will be made available. She believes that for most popular titles, it will be the norm for unabridged audiobooks to be published at the same time as the hardback is released. She predicted that abridged audiobooks will become less popular, and more of a niche market, only for the bestsellers. As unabridged audiobooks become more of a mass market item, and as the production costs decrease with the use of the MP3 format, prices should come down.

For the longer term, Hutton saw the market shifting away from CDs to downloadable audiobooks, already available from companies like Audible.com, but still a fairly small market. When cars have built-in iPod-like devices, perhaps with wi-fi capability to make it easy to download, look for this shift to occur.

Public libraries should be prepared to see even more growth in the popularity of audiobooks, and should be budgeting to replace their aging cassette and multi-CD collections with MP3 audiobooks in the next several years. For many more library users, listening to books will become more popular than reading them. -- Jim Schepke

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