

Letter To Libraries Online

An Electronic Newsletter from the Oregon State Library.....Volume 19, Issue 1, January 2009

Library Board News

STATE LIBRARY BOARD WILL PURSUE MORE COST SHARING FOR L-NET

At their December 5th meeting in Hillsboro, the State Library Board voted to have the staff draft an Administrative Rule that would require most libraries participating in the Statewide Database Licensing Program to contribute to the cost of the [L-net](#) e-reference service. Since 2004, L-net has been supported through an LSTA grant to the Multnomah County Library and in-kind contributions from cooperating libraries that staff the service. The plan that the Board will pursue calls for public and academic libraries to contribute a total of \$30,000 to support the service in 2009-10, a figure that would increase by \$10,000 in each of the following two fiscal years. The cost would be allocated in much the same way as the cost of the statewide database license. Small public and academic libraries that are fully subsidized for databases would be exempt from paying for L-net. The Board also directed the staff to survey public and academic libraries to assess support for the plan. The Administrative Rule will be sent out to libraries in January, and the Board will hold a public hearing on the Rule at their February 20th meeting at the State Library in Salem.

BOARD DISCUSSES NEW STRATEGIES TO BRING SERVICE TO THE UNSERVED

May Garland and Linda Ziedrich, the two leaders of the Linn Library League, shared their struggle over the past five years to bring public library service to over 30,000 citizens of Linn County who have no service at the December 5th Board meeting. To date their efforts have been blocked by a lack of support from elected county and city officials in Linn County. They called for greater staff support from the State Library for citizen efforts like theirs. The Board will continue to discuss new strategies to address the problem of Oregonians without public library service, currently 9% of the state population, at future meetings. In other business the Board adopted a new long range plan for Talking Book and Braille Services. They also granted three appeals of Ready to Read Grants that were submitted late and elected new members to the Talking Book and Braille Services Advisory Council and the Library Services and Technology Act Advisory Council.

BOARD ELECTS NEW ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

At their December 5th Board meeting in Hillsboro, the Oregon State Library Board elected four new representatives to the LSTA Advisory Council. The new Council members will serve a three-year term from January 2009 – December 2011. The new Council members are:

Ed Sale, Beaverton, representing Disadvantaged Persons. Mr. Sale is a Community Relations Officer with the Portland Field Office of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Anne Billeter, Medford, representing Library Users. Ms. Billeter is a retired librarian.

Buzzy Nielsen, North Bend, representing Public Libraries. Mr. Nielsen is the Assistant Director of the North Bend Public Library.

Karen Hill, Cornelius, representing Public Libraries. Ms. Hill is the Director of the Cornelius Public Library.

State Library News

READY TO READ GRANTS MAILED IN DECEMBER

The Ready to Read Grants were mailed to public library directors in December. Included in this mailing was a list of libraries receiving grants this year, and descriptions of the projects they plan to implement with their Ready to Read Grant in 2008-09. 2008-2009 is the second Ready to Read Grant cycle that benefited from the increased grant amounts and minimum grants of \$1,000. The State Library is pleased to report that 15% of libraries receiving Ready to Read Grants in 2007-2008 added one or more best practices to their library services for children. We encourage libraries to add best practices which not only benefit children and teens' literacy development, but also show the Legislature the impact of the increase in Ready to Read Grant funding.

Other Library News

OREGON READS 2009 LAUNCHES IN JANUARY

Oregon Reads, sponsored by the Oregon Library Association, is the first statewide community reading program ever held in Oregon. All Oregonians will be able to participate whether or not their library has any events planned by reading the books and participating in online book discussions on the [Oregon Reads website](#). A grant from the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation provided copies of the feature title, *Stubborn Twig* by Lauren Kessler, to libraries serving 30,000 people or fewer (83% of libraries). A grant from The Starseed Foundation provided one copy each of the juvenile titles, *Bat 6* by Virginia Euwer Wolff and *Apples to Oregon* by Deborah Hopkinson, to each public library, branch, and bookmobile. The Oregon Reads 2009 website will have book discussions, podcasts of events, and a statewide events calendar. All public libraries received a publicity packet with one Oregon Reads poster to display, 100 bookmarks to distribute, and buttons for staff to wear. The Oregon Reads 2009 kick-off event is on January 15th at Portland State University. Programs and events will be concentrated from January through April, but many Oregon Reads events will take place throughout the year as libraries coordinate with their local community reads program or local sesquicentennial celebrations.

OREGON PUBLIC LIBRARIES MAINTAIN HIGH NATIONAL RANKINGS

In the latest national ranking of public library services by state, released in December by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Oregon continues to rank highly in most performance categories. The rankings are based on data for fiscal year 2006. Oregon maintained its second place ranking for public library circulation per capita, second only to Ohio. Oregon public libraries checked out 15.03 books and other library materials per capita, while Ohio checked out 15.54 materials per capita. The average for the U.S. is only 7.28 per capita. Oregon also maintained its second place ranking for resource sharing. Oregon public libraries received 813 interlibrary loans per 1,000 population served. Number one ranked Wisconsin public libraries received 1,109 per thousand. Oregon also ranked in the top 10 in library visits per capita. However, Oregon public libraries ranked only 33rd in reference transactions per capita. While Oregon public libraries are among the top-performing in the country, their funding and staffing is closer to average. Oregon public libraries ranked 12th in total operating revenue and 25th in staffing. Oregon public libraries rank 27th in print materials per capita and only 34th in Internet computers per capita. The rankings are available in a [downloadable report](#) from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

NEW OREGON LIBRARY HISTORY BOOK AVAILABLE

A new book published by the Corvallis-Benton County Library Foundation provides a history not only of the public library in Corvallis, but of Oregon public libraries. *The Best Gift: the History of the Corvallis-Benton*

County Public Library by Thomas C. McClintock begins with a chapter on the history of libraries and follows with several chapters that tell the history of libraries in Oregon. McClintock is retired from the history faculty at Oregon State University, where he taught for 30 years, and he has done years of research on Oregon libraries. This is the only in-print book that recounts the history of Oregon libraries, and as such it should be considered for all public and academic libraries collections. To purchase a copy, send \$25 plus \$3 shipping to the Corvallis-Benton County Library Foundation, 645 NW Monroe Ave., Corvallis, 97330.

P.S. (From the State Librarian)

In November a settlement of the lawsuit between Google and two associations representing authors was announced. Google's partnership with a number of research libraries to scan millions of library books triggered the lawsuit, which the associations alleged was a violation of their rights under U.S. copyright law. The settlement still has to be approved by a Federal judge, but if it is approved Google will be allowed to expand Google Book Search dramatically into what *Library Journal Hotline* called "the web's largest commercial book venture." Instead of just being able to serve up snippets of books, magazines and newspapers, Google will be able to sell access to entire works to individuals, and on a subscription basis to libraries. Public and academic libraries will get to access the database for free on one computer per building, but just for viewing.

So who are the winners and who are the losers if the settlement is approved? Based on my reading of a number of [articles and opinion pieces](#) that have appeared in the blogosphere and elsewhere in the past couple of months, here's what I think:

WINNERS

Google: They are spending \$125 million to settle the suit (not a lot of money to them) and in return get to start up what will probably turn out to be a very profitable new line of business.

Descendents of Famous Dead Authors: They will eventually get royalty checks for out-of-print books they might have never gotten, without this settlement.

LOSERS

Research Libraries: The major research libraries that let Google scan their books are getting relatively [little in return](#). They must join the settlement or face continued liability from the author associations, and if they join, their ability to freely use the books from their collections that have been scanned is severely limited.

Other Libraries: Free views of out-of-print books on one computer in a library will not significantly meet the needs of library users; it will only serve to create demand for what Google wants to sell to libraries and individuals.

Amazon, Yahoo and Microsoft: There is a lot of [concern, even among the supporters](#) of the settlement, that Google will have a monopoly on "long tail" e-books, magazines, and newspapers.

Fair Use: Had this case gone to trial it might have resolved some important issues about [fair use](#) that could have benefited libraries.

U.S. Congress: This might never have happened if the Congress had heeded the many calls for reform of U.S. copyright law, such as the "orphan works" legislation that [ALA has been pushing](#) for several years.

Our Common Culture: Think how much richer our culture would be if we had just maintained the original [Copyright Act of 1790](#) that allowed for books to be in copyright for 28 years and then go into the public domain. – Jim Scheppke

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