

# Letter To Libraries Online

An Electronic Newsletter from the Oregon State Library.....Volume 19, Issue 10,  
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## Library Board News

### STATE LIBRARY BOARD REVISITS COST SHARING FOR L-NET

At their October 19th meeting in Portland the State Library Board will revisit their plan for having larger public and academic libraries contribute to the cost of the L-net e-reference service. In February the Board passed an [Oregon Administrative Rule](#) that allows them to bill libraries for some of the cost of the service, now funded with LSTA funds. The rule says that the Board will deliberate in the last quarter of each calendar year about how much to assess libraries in the next calendar year. However, there is a complicating factor that Board will need to consider, since another rule adopted in February exempts libraries that aren't assessed for part of the statewide database license costs from having to pay for L-net. This rule was intended to exempt only the smallest public and academic libraries that have not paid for database licenses in the past. But because of the low cost negotiated for the Gale databases, the LSTA Advisory Council is recommending that LSTA cover their entire cost. If the Board accepts that recommendation, the rule would exempt all libraries from paying for L-net. The Board will be discussing whether to change the rule to allow for them to assess charges for L-net in 2010.

### BOARD TO AWARD LSTA GRANTS FOR 2010

Also on the October 19th State Library Board agenda is approval of the LSTA program for 2010. The LSTA Advisory Council is recommending that LSTA funds pay for the entire cost of the statewide database license for Gale databases. This is because the negotiated cost of the databases (\$295,000 in 2009-10) is well below the tentative LSTA budget for statewide database licensing. The Council is also recommending that LSTA funds be used to purchase additional statewide database licenses in 2010. The Council will also present recommendations for competitive LSTA grant awards in 2010. The Council is recommending 16 projects for funding in 2010 totaling \$931,270. Other agenda items at the October 19th Board meeting are the annual goals of the State Librarian, plans for the Horner Staff Exchange in 2010 and the annual review of agency head financial transactions. The meeting will be held in the Glisan Room at the Red Lion on the

River, beginning at 10:30 a.m. An open forum will be held at 1:00 p.m. Anyone may address the Board in the open forum.

### BOARD'S BENCHMARK #38 COMMITTEE MEETS

The State Library Board's committee charged with looking at possible new strategies to address the problem of Oregonians without adequate public library services held their first meeting on September 15th. The members of the committee are board members Sue Burkholder, Cliff Trow and Sam Hall, and staff members Jim Scheppeke and MaryKay Dahlgreen. At their first meeting the committee took a close look at areas in the state where library service was inadequate, according to Benchmark #38 criteria, or where services were non-existent. The committee noted that the percentage of Oregonians with substandard services may see a significant decline in the next few years due to several library districts that have been created in recent years that will improve services. The problem of unserved Oregonians is more difficult, and solutions are not readily apparent. The bulk of the unserved population is in five Willamette Valley counties. The committee agreed to invite some library directors from these counties to their next meeting to discuss what it might take to extend library services to unserved populations. The committee plans to hold their next meeting in early November.

### State Library News

#### PLINKIT WINS DIGITAL GOVERNMENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The [Center for Digital Government](#), a national research and advisory institute on information technology policies and best practices in state and local government, has awarded the [Plinkit Collaborative](#) a 2009 [Digital Government Achievement Award](#) in the Government-to-Government category. Plinkit is a library website content management system, based on open source software, that was developed by the Multnomah County Library with a grant from the State Library in 2003. It allows even the smallest public libraries to have quality websites to serve their communities. Currently [about 50 Oregon public libraries](#) use Plinkit to create and maintain their websites. The websites are hosted at the State Library. The success of Plinkit in Oregon caught the attention of other state libraries and cooperative library organizations around the country, which led to the creation of the Plinkit Collaborative in 2006. Currently 22 states are served by a Collaborative member, making Plinkit available to public libraries throughout the US. The Digital Government Achievement Awards showcase progressive and innovative websites and digital applications by government entities worldwide. The awards are judged by a panel of experts on a wide range of categories,

including site accessibility, innovation, cost-savings, ease of use, and exceptional service to the public.

## OREGON CENTER FOR THE BOOK AT 9TH ANNUAL NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL

Oregon Reads children's author Deborah Hopkinson of Corvallis was the featured attraction at the Oregon booth at the 9th annual National Book Festival held on September 26th on the National Mall in Washington D.C. Hopkinson displayed a copy of her brand new book, [Michelle](#), a biography of Michelle Obama. Also on hand were Katie Anderson, who coordinates the Oregon Center for the Book, and Tillamook County Library Director Sara Charlton. The free festival, sponsored by the Library of Congress, drew an estimated 130,000 attendees. The Oregon booth was part of the Pavillion of the States, sponsored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Representatives from state libraries and Centers for the Book provided information and answered questions about their state's authors, libraries, book festivals, book awards, and reading-promotion activities. In the pavilion, thousands of children raced to each state table getting state stamps on their maps of America. IMLS awarded a prize to each person who successfully filled the entire map. Click [here](#) and scroll down to see a photo of the Oregon booth.

## STATE LIBRARY LAUNCHES LIVE HELP

The Government Research Services Team of the Oregon State Library is excited to announce their newest service for State employees, Live Help. In addition to providing research support by phone and email, we now offer assistance through instant messaging four hours per day. Service is available from 10:00 to noon and from 1:00 to 3:00 in the afternoon, Monday - Friday. Launching this additional service point has been an easy transition for staff as we have participated in our state-wide chat reference, L-net, since its inception. Like several other Oregon libraries have done, State Library staff used the L-net Local software to embed the Live Help widget on our [State Employee Information Center](#) web site.

## DIGITAL TALKING BOOK PLAYERS ARE HERE!

After much anticipation, Talking Book and Braille Services is happy to announce that digital books and players are [here](#). TBABS shipped the first digital talking book players to patrons on September 8, and will continue to satisfy patron requests as machines become available in Oregon. Veterans of U.S. armed services have priority for receiving machines in accordance with the [Pratt-Smoot Act of 1931](#). The new digital talking book players are smaller, lighter-weight, and

very easy to use. Plus, the digital talking book machine is compatible with the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) digital books available from the [National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped](#).

### NATIVE AMERICAN COLLECTION AT TBABS

The Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums' 2009 national conference takes place this month in Portland. In support of the conference and Native American Heritage Month in November, TBABS has provided enhanced access to our own audio and Braille Native American collection. Currently, the TBABS collection contains more than 900 titles focusing on Native American interests and 200 titles by Native American authors (from a pool of 66 Native American Authors). Contact Talking Books today to reserve Native American interest titles for your print-disabled patrons. If they are not registered with TBABS, simply print and fill out an application from our [website](#).

### SEND YOUR READING LISTS TO TBABS

Teachers, Librarians, Teacher-Librarians—lend us your ears! The school year has just gotten underway and many of you are looking at, working with, and trying to fill school reading lists for your visually and physically impaired students. Talking Book and Braille Services has access to many titles commonly found on student reading lists. Share those lists with TBABS and we'll review our collection and make sure to have those books on hand to loan to Oregon students. We have many titles in many formats such as, audio cassette, digital cassette, Braille, web-Braille, Unabridged School Download, and BARD. Send your reading lists today to [Elke Bruton](#) or to the Oregon State Library, 250 Winter St NE, Salem, OR 97301.

### OSLIS GETS A FACELIFT

In early September the OSLIS committee unveiled a new look for the site. The goals were to make the opening pages less text-heavy, highlight the three major features of OSLIS, and make it easier to navigate the information literacy lessons. When you first enter [OSLIS](#), you are asked to identify yourself. That is because the content is catered by age level (elementary or secondary) and function (student or educator). From there you are routed to a page featuring the main resources on OSLIS. Learn How to Do Research leads to the information literacy lessons, Find Information directs users to the Gale databases and other resources, and Cite My Sources leads to the Citation Maker templates, either MLA or APA. If you find yourself helping a student access Gale through OSLIS,

remember that they need login information that is specific to their district. For a list of Gale user names for the school district/s you serve, contact [Jennifer Maurer](#), the School Library Consultant. Finally, be on the lookout for an update to the MLA Citation Maker templates. Soon they will align with the new guidelines found in the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*.

### Other Library News

#### LIBRARY JOURNAL NAMES REP. BUCKLEY A “WINNER”

An [editorial](#) in the September 15th issue of *Library Journal* recognizes State Representative Peter Buckley of Ashland as a “political winner.” *LJ* Editor Francine Fialkoff commends Buckley as a politician who “stood against the tide washing away school libraries and school librarian positions” in the recent legislative session. At the suggestion of constituent Anne Billeter, a retired librarian and former OLA President, Buckley worked with school librarian Nancy Sullivan and other members of the Oregon Association of School Libraries to craft HB 2586 that will require all Oregon school districts to plan for strong school libraries, beginning next year. The bill also makes school libraries eligible for a grant program at the Oregon Department of Education that funds projects that improve student achievement. The Oregon Library Association and the State Library Board of Trustees also provided strong support for the bill. OLA Lobbyist Nan Heim worked to sign on 29 co-sponsors from both parties, nearly a third of the entire Legislative Assembly. As a result of this strong support the bill passed unanimously in both the House and Senate and was signed by Governor Kulongoski on July 28th.

#### WITTER BYNNER AWARD WINNER TO READ IN PORTLAND

Oregon poet Mary Szybist received one of two Witter Bynner Awards selected by national Poet Laureate Kay Ryan. Szybist is the author of *Granted*, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and the recipient of a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. She will be reading her poetry, along with poet Michele Glazer, on Monday, October 5th at 7:00 p.m. in Smith Hall at Lewis & Clark College in Portland. This reading is sponsored by the Oregon Center for the Book, Lewis & Clark College, the Witter Bynner Foundation, and the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

**P.S. (From the State Librarian)**

*In honor of Oregon's Sesquicentennial, I continue to devote my column to brief sketches of early Oregon libraries. The beginnings of library service in 19th century Oregon is interesting and deserves to be better known and appreciated by people who work in libraries today.*

I am going to conclude my series of sketches of important 19th century Oregon libraries with the first government-run library in the state. Decades before there were city libraries and county libraries and state university libraries, there was the Territorial Library. After statehood in 1859, it was also known as the State Library, and its director, the State Librarian. This can be the source of some confusion, since today's State Library has only a slight connection to this library.

The Territorial Library was created by the U.S. Congress in 1848 in the same legislation that created the Oregon Territory, along with a \$5,000 appropriation for books. The intended purpose of this library was mostly as a law library for the new Oregon Territory, but the initial collection also contained books on politics, education, history and agriculture. The Territorial Library started out in Oregon City, until the capital moved to Salem in 1851. Tragically, the entire contents of the library were lost in the Capitol fire of 1855, except for a few books that were in circulation.

In 1856 Congress was asked for a \$20,000 appropriation to replace the Library, but only \$500 was appropriated. The Library struggled for decades to acquire an adequate collection for the new state. In a report to the Legislature in 1872, the State Librarian complained that his library was "one of the most constantly and consistently neglected institutions of the state — inferior to the library of many respectable villages in the eastern states."

By the turn of the century the State Library had not seen much improvement. Meanwhile, in 1905, the Oregon Library Commission was established under the dynamic leadership of Cornelia Marvin, newly arrived from Wisconsin. Her vision for the Commission was to have it become a real state library to serve a variety of needs for improving library service in the state. By 1913 she was able to, as she put it, "win the name" of the old State Library for the Commission. In that year the Legislature changed the name of the Oregon Library Commission to the Oregon State Library, and the former State Library, successor to the Territorial Library, became the Oregon Supreme Court Library. Some of the general collections and government documents collection of the Supreme Court Library came over to the new State Library. For more than two decades, both libraries were housed together on separate floors of the Supreme Court Building. It would be Cornelia Marvin's successor Harriet Long who would finally achieve Cornelia's vision of a real state library in its own new building in 1939.

I have sometimes wondered if any of those original books from the Territorial Library that were in circulation in 1855, and survived the fire, are still around. If you ever run across one, I hope you will let me know! – Jim Scheppke

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