

Letter To Libraries Online

An Electronic Newsletter



Volume 14, Issue 1

January 2004

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LIBRARY BOARD NEWS =====

STATE LIBRARY BOARD ADOPTS DATABASE LICENSING RULE

At their meeting at the West Linn Public Library on December 12, 2003, the State Library Board adopted a permanent Oregon Administrative Rule for the Statewide Database Licensing Program. The rule included several changes to the temporary rule adopted in August, 2003, that were suggested by the Statewide Database Licensing Advisory Committee. The permanent rule should be posted on the Secretary of State's website within a few weeks. The Board also approved a plan to celebrate the

State Library's centennial in 2005 and made appointments to Board advisory councils.

Two requests for unprogrammed LSTA funds were considered by the Board. The Salem Public Library requested \$12,000 to undertake survey research related to their efforts to form a library district that would bring public library service to 44,000 unserved residents of Marion and Polk counties. The other request was from the Jefferson County Library District for \$38,500 to work with citizens in Wheeler County to explore the possibility of annexing Wheeler County to the Jefferson County Library District. The Board approved both requests, adding \$500 to the Jefferson County project to fund an evaluation. The next meeting of the State Library will be on February 20, 2004, at the State Library in Salem.

NEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ELECTED

The Oregon State Library Board elected new representatives to two advisory groups at its December 12, 2003 meeting.

The Talking Book and Braille Services Advisory Council Senior Citizen Patron-At-Large representatives are Sharon Baker of Milwaukie and Sara Long of Salem. Mrs. Baker is an avid reader and is the leader of several low-vision support groups in the Portland area. Ms. Long has been a volunteer in TBABS and is an active member of the Oregon Chapter of the American Council of the Blind. The parent-at-large representative is Leisa Sekhon of Portland. Mrs. Sekhon has a seven-year-old son who is a voracious reader of talking and Braille books, and she herself has been a user of Talking Book and Braille Services since 1986. Daniel Long is new to the TBABS Advisory Council also as a representative of VisionNorthwest, an organization dedicated to providing adaptive aids to people with low vision.

The Library Services and Technology Act Advisory Council filled four vacancies. The Public Library Representative is Gary Sharp of North Bend. Mr. Sharp is Director of Library Services of North Bend Public Library and has experience with public libraries since 1984. He has served on a variety of Oregon Library Association committees, including a term as secretary to the executive board, and conference treasurer, and has been an LSTA Peer Evaluator.

The Special Library Representative is Gretchen Leslie of Lattice Semiconductor. Ms. Leslie has over 25 years experience in special libraries, working with high tech corporations. Her previous employers include Intel, Washington State Energy Office, the Washington State Library, and WLN (Western Library Network.).

The Academic Library Representative is Patty Cutright of Eastern Oregon University. Ms. Cutright spent two years as the Director at Myrtle Point Public Library and from 1986-current as an academic librarian/director. She has been responsible for securing a number of grants for Eastern Oregon University Library, Pioneer Library System, and the College of Micronesia.

The new Library User Representative is Carol Ruggeri of Newport. Ms.

Ruggeri is President of the Newport Library Board of Trustees, Treasurer of the Rotary Club of Newport and on the Small Business Development Advisory Committee, and is a long-time library user and supporter.

We welcome each of these individuals to our advisory committees and look forward to working with them.

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT NEWS

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STATISTICS REVIEW TIME

With statistics in from all public libraries except for Banks, Cottage Grove, and Woodburn, we are beginning to sift through the data for anything that looks out of the ordinary. The explanatory notes everyone has attached to data are extremely helpful and save a lot of time! We appreciate the increasing efforts of directors to scrutinize the data before submission, as it reduces errors such as a small library reporting "-,910" books added, or 16,000 children's programs with 30 in total attendance. We will begin work on the 2003-2004 statistical survey in February and any suggestions for improvement are always welcome.

GATES FOUNDATION DECEMBER TRANSITION SEMINARS

Completing its State Partnership Program for Oregon public libraries, the Gates Foundation presented three transition seminars in early December to review libraries' tools to support the Gates computers and help libraries learn about resources for sustaining library technology in the future.

Ralph Buchan from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Technical Support Team made presentations at three libraries for librarians and technical support staff: Beaverton Public Library, Douglas County Library (Roseburg), and Pierce Library (Eastern Oregon University), with a video feed and videotape recording via the Pioneer Library System to Blue Mountain Community College, Harney County Library (Burns), and Treasure Valley Community College library.

The Gates Foundation technical support program to Oregon libraries ended December 18, 2003. The transition seminar reviewed unique features of the Gates public access computer, such as security and profiles, and gave an overview of how to design and build a low-cost public access computer with Gates level security. Also addressed were troubleshooting tips and tricks (e.g., imaging or ghosting the hard-drive), upgrading software and hardware on the Gates models, and licensing and re-purposing granted computers.

The Gates Transition Seminar PowerPoint presentation is linked from the State Library Web page at <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/gates.htm>. Contact Pam Horan for more information, pam.horan@state.or.us, 503-378-2112, ext. 224.

E-RATE DISCOUNT APPLICATION DEADLINE

The Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) closing date for Form 471 for Funding Year 2004 is February 4, 2004. Form 471 is the second step in the E-rate application process.

Considering the February 4th deadline, the last possible filing date for Form 470 (the first form in the application process) would be January 7, 2003. Libraries must submit a Form 470 and allow it to be posted to the SLD Web page for no fewer than 28 days before filing the Form 471. You won't want to wait until January 7th to file, as you would only have one day to open bids, evaluate proposals, sign contracts, and file your 471 inside the window. By posting your 470 earlier, you would have time to complete all of these tasks (a much more realistic timeline). The 28 day posting requirement ensures the integrity of the competitive process for service providers, a fundamental tenet of the program.

For more information about the program you may visit the Schools and Libraries Division Web page at <http://www.sl.universalservice.org/> or the Oregon E-rate Web page at <http://www.ode.state.or.us/erate/>. Both are good resources and are linked from the State Library Web page at <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/grants.html>. Contact Pam Horan for more information, pam.horan@state.or.us, 503-378-2112, ext. 224.

STATEWIDE DATABASE LICENSING PROGRAM: OREGONIAN TRAINING

Four training sessions on the Oregonian database were presented by Michele Klinowski of NewsBank for Oregon libraries December 17th and 18th. The sessions were held at Southwestern Oregon Community College, Springfield Public Library, Linn-Benton Community College and Chemeketa Community College, with a video feed to Southern Oregon. A total of 31 library staff from academic, public and school libraries attended the sessions, and videotapes for future use and loan were made for the State Library, Pioneer Library System, Clatsop Community College, and PSU's educational media program. For more information contact Pam Horan, pam.horan@state.or.us, 503-378- 2112, ext. 224.

OTHER LIBRARY NEWS
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MEASURE 30 HAS POTENTIAL IMPACT ON STATE LIBRARY BUDGET

The State Library has received guidance from the State Budget Director about how the defeat of Measure 30 could affect the budgets of state agencies. The Legislative Assembly adopted a plan to cut the State Budget if voters fail to approve Measure 30. About three-quarters of the estimated \$800 million that would need to be cut is stipulated in HB 5077. The State Library is not one of the agencies targeted in this legislation. However, the State Library General Fund budget would be subject to across the board cuts that are mandated in HB 2148 to close the rest of the budget gap. The State Budget Director estimates that across the board cuts could amount to as much as 5- 10 percent of

General Fund budgets. For the State Library this would amount to approximately \$132,000 to \$264,000. The General Fund is the funding source for Talking Book and Braille Services and the Ready to Read Grant program. The rest of the State Library budget is funded with Federal LSTA funds and by an assessment on state government agencies.

OPEN HOUSE AND LEARNING FAIR A BIG SUCCESS

The Government Research and Electronic Services team (GRES) held an Open House and Learning Fair for its state agency customers on December 12. This event was held in partnership with Administrative Services Statewide Training and Development and Chemeketa Community College.

The GRES staff decorated the library's first floor conference room and setup a large number of displays that featured library services, special collections, and products available to state agency employees. DAS Statewide Training and Chemeketa Community College also exhibited a broad array of certification programs, formal classes, and seminars that support employee professional development needs. An estimated 135 customers representing more than 30 state agencies attended.

The Open House and Learning Fair was a wonderful opportunity to showcase library resources and services as well as to get acquainted with customers in a warm and informal environment. A state agency employee who had driven over from Bend to attend summed up her appreciation: "This was definitely worth the drive!" Our partners also expressed the value of being event participants and look forward to planning a similar, cooperative activity next year.

FUND DEVELOPMENT

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NEW YEAR'S GOAL SETTING

Resolving to raise more money for your library ought to be on your list of things to do in 2004. The first step is compiling and telling your own story. Once someone understands the importance of the library's services and programs, and the dependence on private contributions to make it all happen, it's easier for you to ask, and easier for the individual to give!

Get out from behind your desk and do something fresh and invigorating:

1. Visit with community members who are not necessarily library users; talk about your favorite subject, the library. Invite people

to participate

in an upcoming library event.

2. Ask people what they like about the library; ask people what they would like to see different in the library. If the change is a simple

one, great;

however, if the change is major, ask if they would be willing to help the library obtain their wish.

3. Speak to groups or individuals--formally or informally.

Build relationships

with community members; ask them to share their favorite library story.

4. Use every opportunity you can to educate/inform/entertain people about what's happening at the library. Explain how donation funds are used to expand service.
5. Make your own significant contribution to the library, and while it might be a stretch to your comfort zone, ask others to donate to the library. 6. Repeat steps 1-5.

Happy New Year!

For more detailed fundraising assistance, resolve to contact Kathy Thomas, Oregon State Library Fund Development Consultant, Kathryn.Thomas@state.or.us, 503-378-2112 x 264.

PS. (FROM THE STATE LIBRARIAN)

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It is very disheartening for the State Library Board and staff to witness the disinvestment in school library media services that is occurring in Oregon public schools. Part of the original mission of the State Library was to promote and establish school libraries in the state. When the State Library was designed and built in the late 1930's, part of the original design was a "model school library." We have pictures of the model school library that occupied a room in the southeast corner of the first floor, where a conference room is now. The idea was that school principals and superintendents could come to Salem and see for themselves what a school library looked like and how it operated.

As we have reported, the number of school media specialists dropped 12%, to only 510 for the entire state, between 2001 and 2002. We expect to see another drop when statistics are published for 2003. In 1980 there was one media specialist for every 547 students in Oregon schools. Today there is one media specialist for every 1,027 students. There are now entire school districts with only one media specialist, and some that have none. While we don't have data on this, the anecdotal evidence is that it has become the norm for most Oregon students not to have a media specialist in their elementary school, though it seems that most middle schools and high schools still have media specialists. I have often thought that it might be more important to have media specialists in elementary schools than in the higher grades.

What makes the problem worse for our students is that unlike other types of libraries, school libraries don't scale very well. When a public library loses funding, or an academic library loses funding, services can be scaled back. Public libraries can reduce their hours; academic libraries can cut back on their acquisitions. Budget reductions, even severe ones, can be managed to do the least harm to library services. This tends not to be true in school libraries. The typical scenario is that an administrative decision is made to eliminate the media specialist from a school, and the library soon languishes and becomes ineffective. Untrained, low-wage aides run the library (basically a circulation function), or maybe even volunteers. In either case, the library is on the path, at that point, to becoming of little value to student learning.

Short of a miraculous turnaround in the funding for Oregon schools, maybe it's time to think about organizing school library services that do scale. Reforming school library organizations might be a constructive first step, if we ever are able to build back our school libraries. What this might look like is a more traditional library organization, with a library director at the district level, and what are essentially branch libraries in the schools. If a district could afford media specialists in all the schools that would be great. They would all work with the library director in a collaborative and efficient service delivery system, as most public and academic libraries do. But if this was not affordable, there could still be well-trained library paraprofessionals in the school libraries that worked collaboratively with what librarians there were in the district to still deliver a consistent standard of quality service in every service outlet, again, like most public and academic libraries do.

It's time for the Oregon Educational Media Association to look ahead to better days for our schools, and explore new organizational models for the delivery of quality school library media services in every school. If we get the chance to do it over again, let's invent a better future, and not just return to the past.-- 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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LETTER TO LIBRARIES ONLINE is available free of charge and is available only in
electronic form at the Oregon State Library's Homepage:

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the authors and not necessarily those of the Oregon State Library. News items or
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