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Oklahoma MPLA Board Report  
July 8, 2004

by Wayne Hanway, Oklahoma Library Association Representative

#### New Dean of Oklahoma State University Libraries

Sheila Grant Johnson is the new Dean of Libraries at Oklahoma State University. She has been with the OSU libraries since 1978 and has been Assistant Dean for Public Services and Collections since 2000. Johnson received her MLS from the University of Texas - Austin. She succeeds Edward Johnson, who retired earlier this year.

#### New Head of Library Development

Vicki Mohr became the new director of the Office of Library Development at the Oklahoma Department of Libraries on June 7th. Mohr has been a library consultant with ODL for a number of years, but also has been in private business and worked for Oklahoma's Pioneer Library System.

#### New Oklahoma City Library to Open

Oklahoma City's new Ronald J. Norick Downtown Library will open on Tuesday, August 17th, according to Metropolitan Library System Executive Director Donna Morris. The 112,356 square-foot, \$24 million building project was held up more than three years because of site problems and legal battles over a subcontractor's delivery of disputed exterior panels. Several days before the opening ceremony, on August 13th, there will be a symbolic "book passing" from the old downtown library to the new with a human chain of more than 1,500 volunteers. The old library will close on July 17th, and more than 100,000 books and materials will be moved by the staff.

#### A New Spin Begins

Incoming Oklahoma Library Association President Lynn McIntosh announced the theme for the 2005 annual conference will be "A New Spin @ Your Library." Planning for the year began at the annual leadership retreat, held June 3rd & 4th at the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation's conference center in Ardmore. One highlight was the announcement that over \$14,000 was raised for OLA's Centennial Endowment Fund at the 2004 annual conference in Tulsa, and the fund has now grown to over \$40,000. OLA will be trying a new venue for the 2005 annual conference, at the U. S. Postal Service Training Center in Norman. It was announced that important improvements in the OLA web site will be taking place in the coming year.

#### Read and Vote

The second-year list of books to choose from for Oklahoma's statewide one book program has been announced. "Oklahoma Reads Oklahoma" is a four year program that will feature a book each year on the Oklahoma experience to be read and discussed between now and Oklahoma's centennial year in 2007, and has been designated an official centennial program. The first year's selection, which is being read and discussed across the state in 2004, is *The Honk and Holler Opening Soon*, by Billie Letts. For more details go to the website: <http://www.okreadsok.org/>.

## Funding

The state budget situation in Oklahoma has improved a little. The Legislature gave state employees a pay raise, including the staff at the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, but none of the staff or program funds that were cut a year ago were restored.

Coming OLA workshops include (for more information, go to [www.ok.libs.org](http://www.ok.libs.org)):

- Aug. 19 - Support Your Support Staff, a workshop for library paraprofessionals, sponsored by the Support Staff Round Table. At Southern Oklahoma Technology Center and the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, Ardmore.