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## A Daunting but Inspiring Event: A Letter from Rob Everett

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## A Letter from Rob Everett

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*by Rob Everett*

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*Director,*

*Springfield Public Library*

November 18, 2011

To members of OLA:

The Oregon Library Association, through the OLA Library Preservation Round Table, was asked to be one of several partners in the Connecting to Collections: Statewide Planning Grant, administered by the Oregon Museums Association. It was my privilege to be one of OLA's representatives at an all-day leadership summit, held at the State Library in Salem on March 7, 2011. This meeting was attended by representatives of Oregon's cultural heritage community, ranging from small, local history museums to large university archives, and from Oregon's community libraries to the Oregon Heritage Commission. This meeting brought together, for the first time, the many disparate agencies, commissions, and post-secondary institutions that in some way, shape, or form have an investment in, and a responsibility for, preserving Oregon's cultural heritage.

It was by turns a sobering, reaffirming, and ultimately inspiring day. It was sobering to hear the state of our museums, special collections, and archives. And it was daunting to hear that so few resources, both financial and human, are being dedicated to this important and time-sensitive work. Not only do we need to step up to meet the challenge of un-managed and/or deteriorating collections and artifacts, but we need to do so immediately.

It was reaffirming because, through the Connecting to Collections initiative, so many of us, large and small, expert and amateur, were brought together to learn of the plight of Oregon's cultural heritage, forming a network that can work to accomplish for the entire citizenry of the state something that no one entity could accomplish on its own.

And finally, it was inspiring to experience the shared sense of commitment that we all came away with that day. I know that the Oregon Library Association is rededicated to supporting this initiative and helping realize a statewide accessible, cultural heritage resource, both physical and virtual, that will enrich our citizen's lives for decades to come.

As an Oregon librarian and a 5th generation Oregonian, I'm proud to play a small part in this endeavor, for myself, for my children, and for my grandchildren.

Respectfully yours,

Rob Everett, Past-President  
Oregon Library Association

