

# OLAQ

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# OLA

## Quarterly

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In this Issue

***Special Focus—Political Action***

**Trustees Must Be  
Advocates for Libraries**

**The Enemy is Us**

**Coming of Age with the OCA**

**Staying Effective and Safe  
in the Political Arena**

*... and more!*

*Winter 1997  
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Oregon Library  
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# OLA QUARTERLY

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## Stepping into the Political Arena

**M**aybe you thought you were safe from political commercials and pleas for your vote, your money and your soul. But, the 69th session of the Oregon Legislature is just beginning and the library community needs to be prepared for action! To be prepared, we need to know the issues and the rules; we need to be committed and united. While still reacting to the November election, we also must look forward and deal with whatever the new political reality will be.

The Oregon Library Association has taken great strides in its political astuteness, but as with many things in life, there is always room for improvement. This issue of the *OLA Quarterly* is a pep talk, a pat on the back, a reminder of past battles, and a resource for future ones. Take the time to read about why you should be politically involved for libraries, then learn how to do it. Finally, reflect on what can really happen if the library community works together for change.

Janet Webster, Guest Editor  
*OSU, Hatfield Marine Science Center*

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**Oregon Library**  
**Association**

Plan on coming to  
Salem on February  
26 for OLA's  
Legislative Day.

why do it?

**W**e public library trustees and board members in Oregon cast a small shadow.[1] Too small.

Several hundred prominent citizens throughout our state serve on local library boards, usually in an advisory capacity to elected officials. We could be enormously influential when political action is required to benefit libraries. As a practical matter, we are not.

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## Trustees Must Be Advocates for Libraries

by George Bell

Salem Public Library Advisory Board

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In fact, though several critical statewide measures have been on the ballot in the last two general elections, trustees have been conspicuous by their silence. We should have been in the vanguard, where our voices in support of libraries would have been heard and listened to by our fellow citizens.

The professional library community in Oregon has learned, slowly and painfully, that the time and the issues do not permit leaving the battle to someone else.

Beginning in the early 1990s, the threat from the Oregon Citizens Alliance (OCA) was so clear and dangerous that the Oregon Library Association (OLA) was compelled to organize politically and move to the ramparts. Measure 9, the first wave of the OCA assault, was defeated decisively by Oregon voters in November 1992, due in no small measure to the efforts of the library community.

Since then, similar as well as new threats to the integrity and well-being of libraries have appeared on Oregon ballots. The OLA has challenged them all, fearlessly. But trustees have not joined in the fray. That's unfortunate because we've been needed.

Never more, it turns out, than in the election just past – the November 5, 1996 general election. Ballot Measure 47, the so-called cut-and-cap measure, clearly signaled a devastating future for library budgets dependent on local property taxes.

OLA's leadership spotted it early and marshaled arguments against the measure. A position paper was drafted, space was purchased in the Voter's Pamphlet, and educational workshops were scheduled around the state. A letter to the editor was sent to the state's newspapers, warning about the effects of Measure 47 on Oregon's public libraries.

Where were the trustees? No where to be seen.

Trustees were no-shows in the fight against Measure 47 – the most crippling measure to libraries ever to appear on an Oregon ballot – simply because we

failed to see ourselves in an advocacy role. We were unable to see beyond the parochial agenda of our last board meeting. It was a fatal blindspot.

Some trustees may argue they were prohibited from political action by state law, which regards citizen members of boards and commissions as government employees, and, therefore, does not permit any official involvement with politics.[2]

The law does forbid official group action, but individuals have their full civil rights. Nothing prevents a trustee from promoting or opposing a ballot measure or candidate in the manner of any citizen.

So, according to the attorney general, the Salem Public Library Advisory Board, on which I serve, was precluded from passing an official resolution in opposition to Measure 47. But as individual members, we were perfectly free to say or write whatever we chose about the measure.

For the sake of argument, let's suppose that two weeks before the last election, every library trustee in the state had written a cautionary letter to the editor of their local newspaper with information about the threat Measure 47 posed to their library and its services. Would our neighbors and fellow citizens have paid attention? Almost certainly.

But the issue here isn't election-time political activity. The point is not to rush forward with a lock after the horse is already out of the barn. The point is that we trustees must begin to see ourselves as political partisans for libraries, statewide and locally.

It's not hard to do. Here are three basic steps that will enable us to exercise our political responsibilities toward the libraries we serve:

1. **Join OLA.** Trustees have their own separate division within OLA, and the chair is a voting member of OLA's executive committee. For some inexplicable reason, few trustees involve themselves with OLA – to their detriment. Seeing library issues from a statewide perspective enhances a trustee's performance on a local board and provides an improved service to the library and the community. Public library directors should aggressively encourage their trustees to be part of OLA. Everyone would benefit.
2. **Contribute to the People for Oregon Libraries, the PAC.** Even at the library level, money is the milk of politics, and trustees should not be shy about writing checks in behalf of the library political action committee. The PAC is totally separate from librarians' professional organization, OLA. Its purpose is to contribute financially to worthy legislative candidates, to support local library issues, and to support or oppose ballot measures. An annual contribution of \$10 qual-

See Trustees page 19

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# The Enemy is Us:

## *Political Life and Academic Librarians in Oregon*

by Susan Barnes Whyte  
Linfield College

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When asked to write this before the November election, I wondered how to wax eloquent enough to persuade academic librarians to involve themselves in the political process in this state. After all, in my thoughts, the rationale seems obvious and not in need of promulgation. No matter where we work, we are all part of a larger group, defined by town, county, church, or school. To remain inside the proverbial ivy-covered walls of our academic institutions seems insipid in these days, particularly as boundaries in higher education are falling themselves. The concepts of "campus" and "residential students" are changing tenfold in this state. With this redefining, it seems easier to understand that we academic librarians are part of a bigger whole. And, indeed to the public, the citizens of this state, a library is a library; few people make the distinction among the types we define for ourselves.

A few quite logical arguments spring to mind in this quest for political activism among all librarians in Oregon. For one, this is a small state in terms of inhabitants. Demography matters. In this state, political actions and measures passed impact us more visibly than perhaps would occur in more populous states. And, there are few librarians over all in this state; so to dissect us into special, public, school or academic diffuses any positive impact on the legislative environment.

Another argument seems perforce beyond logic when one contemplates the passage of Measure 47. Many of us have children in public schools, many of us work in publicly funded institutions; we are the public. We use all these services. We grew up with a certain expectation of the responsibility of the government to provide services for its citizens. Although at this point in time, just weeks past the election, no one knows exactly how Measure 47 will be interpreted and put into action by the legislature; and, no one can expect her community to remain untouched.

Moreover, public and school libraries are part of the larger educational context of our culture. Historically, public libraries ushered many immigrants into this "melting pot" (now more often referred to as a "tossed salad"). (Read *Apostles of Culture* for a stun-

ning history of librarianship as public entity.) We in higher education wish for students to begin their forays into information gathering, selection, and evaluation before they enter higher education. All of us benefit by having a foundation of public literacy and free access to information – a cornerstone of civic life in the United States.

A more pragmatic reason to act politically is that the checks are in the mail which reimburse net-lenders in this state. This radical piece of legislation would never have been approved without the support of all the divisions of the Oregon Library Association. This payment is part of the Oregon LINK program which also offers regional reference referral service throughout the state. We all would never have managed both net-lender reimbursement and reference referral centers without participating as a group in the political process.

So, come to Legislative Day in Salem in February. Come see the balloons and children's story times which will demonstrate the educational, positive influence of public libraries. Come speak with your legislator. Legislators listen to constituents who make the effort to talk. All is not lost with the passage of Measure 47, but ground must be gained and creative solutions must be arrived at.

Remember that children, students, and people of all ages matter. Remember that we owe it to ourselves as librarians as well as citizens of Oregon to work for the common good. We are a part of a civic culture founded upon participation in this democratic government. As Robert Bellah, author of *Habits of the Heart* and eloquent spokesperson for civic culture in this country, puts it in the November 28, 1996 "New York Review of Books" (p. 65):

"Our civic tradition has emphasized that we are all members of a common society. Our labor tradition has called us to solidarity with our fellow workers. Our religious tradition has told us that we are members of the same body."

Finally, remember Carnegie's words: "public libraries are the university for the common man."

See you in Salem. ☐

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*Susan Barnes Whyte is the Reference and Extended Services Librarian at Linfield College in McMinnville. She served as 1993/94 president of the Academic Division of OLA.*

LIBRARIAN  
WHY DO IT?

why do it?

I was given a clear mission when asked to write for this issue of the *OLA Quarterly*: to explore those working in children's library services throughout Oregon to become involved in the political process. Involvement means becoming familiar with issues affecting library services, meeting with your legislators to enlist their support of the "One to Get Ready: Read!" campaign, and letting your legislators know that measures introduced in Salem have lasting consequences at the local level. The passage of Measure 47 does not mean that this mission has gone away; indeed, the need for concerted effort by OLA members during the 1997 session is even more pronounced. The shape of that effort will be clearer once legislators begin to deal with the intricacies of Measure 47. I hope headlines such as one in Eugene's *Register*

*Guard*, "Libraries, Parks Top list of Measure 47 Casualties," will be inaccurate.

While I am hopeful, I am still struggling to make sense of what happened on Election Day and what it means to children's services. The idealist in me, that portion that guides much of my work in children's services, wonders how it was possible that so many people placed their pocketbook before the welfare of Oregon's children. Unfortunately, my realist side does not wonder at all. However, as I try to resolve my idealism with reality, I am drawn to a fairy tale, which at first glance may seem to shed no

light at all. But, bear with me. Fairy tales are timeless, exploring roles and scenarios that can illuminate the present.

I turn to two versions of Little Red Riding Hood: Arthur Rackham's presentation of Perrault in *The Arthur Rackham Fairy Book*, and James Marshall's contemporary retelling, *Red Riding Hood*. The former is traditional and serious, while the latter is light-hearted, and, as the publisher states, contains "irreverent flourishes." In both, the tellings provide "a shock of recognition" through their depiction of the straightforward actions of just a few characters. The differences between the two versions, particularly in the endings, are shocking enough to lead even the most apolitical advocate for children, me, to act.

First, let's get reacquainted with the characters.

**Mother:** This caring homemaker who can whip up griddle-cakes or custard in a flash is a trusting single parent living near the Dark Woods. She sends Red Riding Hood off alone without warning in Rackham. Marshall adds the necessary modern touch to the sendoff: "Now, whatever you do, go straight to Granny's, do not tarry, do not speak to strangers."

**Red Riding Hood:** She is a loving, caring, trustworthy, and trusting girl who becomes scared in the Dark Woods. She is big hearted, but gullible, independent, but defenseless. She is eaten, permanently in Rackham, and temporarily in Marshall's version, where she is extremely grateful to be rescued.

**The Wolf:** Here is a single-focused, smooth-talking, selfish male who is also witty, quick thinking, and agile. He is the opportunist par excellence and a master of disguise. He has the nasty habit of swallowing without chewing, and according to Marshall, snores.

**Granny:** This trusting, straightforward, and spirited old woman lives on the other side of the Dark Woods. She loves to read and "was furious at having her reading interrupted upon the appearance of the wolf" (Marshall). She is bedridden and defenseless.

Discounting the minor differences, Rackham's and Marshall's versions are parallel to this point with only two (mother and wolf) of the four original characters alive. In Rackham's version, only the page number appears after "the wicked wolf fell upon poor Little Red Riding Hood and ate her up." This, or a similar version, must be the first telling many of us heard as children. The story we heard ends suddenly. The wolf wins. And the wolf will win again and again no matter how often the story is told.

See **Big Teeth** page 19

## What Big Teeth You Have!

by Brian Bond  
Coos Bay Public Library

Illustration: Sue Dolan



(S) Bio

## Lobbyist Nan Heim: A Profile

by Carolyn Peake  
Lake Oswego Public Library

When Nan Heim was a little girl growing up in Washington, D.C., her parents often took her to watch the U.S. Congress in action. She grew up with a fascination for government and its inner workings. Nan's father was a member of the Eisenhower administration and her mother was President of the Northern Virginia Republican Women. Her parents were strong proponents of school integration and firm believers that all children, black and white, deserved a first rate education.

As a young woman out of college, Nan worked in the Washington office of Oregon Congressman John Dellenback. It was as a member of his staff that she came to Oregon for the first time. She was charmed by the state and the independent nature of the way government worked. So, when she was offered a job heading up the Public Affairs Section of the Oregon Department of Education, she took it.

Working in the bureaucracy did not turn out to be Nan's cup of tea, but she was still in love with the Oregon legislative process – the "citizen" legislature with its openness, citizen involvement, and the feel of people all working together. That was what prompted her to go to work for Roger Martin's new lobbying firm in 1978, working on the campaign to defeat Oregon's first property tax limitation measure. Oregon Library Association was one of Nan's first clients as a lobbyist and getting the legislature to pass per capita state aid for libraries was the goal.

In 1982, Nan went into business for herself in what was to become Nan Heim/Associates: Communications and Public Affairs. Jody Fischer, an attorney and mother of six, has been with her for the past eight years, and OLA members have come to know and respect Jody's shrewd intellect and wry sense of humor. But it is Nan who has become known in legislative circles as "the library lady" and has held our hands, and urged us on, and pepped us up, and kept at us not to let up on the effort to become more politicized professionals. Nan has guided us through numerous legislative battles – some even felt like sieges – to achieve (and just as hard, keep) per capita, get LSCA money out of the State Library budget and into local library programs, create Special District legislation, support confidentiality of library records, and fight and win many, many censorship battles.

Nan always preaches visibility and communication. "We all have to do a better job communicating with the public in positive and honest ways," she says. "Librarians are better than just about anyone at communicating – it is a professional strength." She hopes that the passage of Ballot measure 47 in November will be a call for leadership.

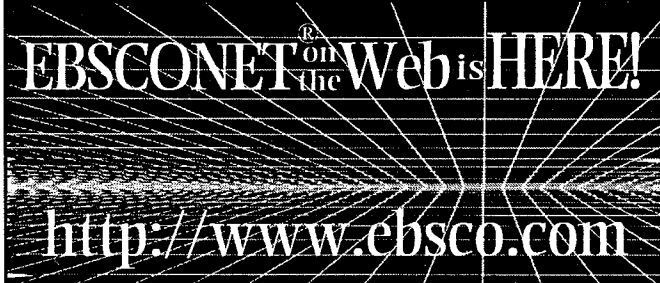
why do it?

"Our best hope is that responsible leaders in both parties will come up with something to address legislative issues regarding taxation and find a middle ground." Nan still loves what she does and the political process and says she always looks at the glass as half full rather than half empty. She has just finished a term as President of the Capitol Club, whose members are the 400 professional lobbyists in Oregon.

Here are some thoughts she shared with OLA members following the passing of Measure 47:

- Ballot Measure 47 has passed, putting library services throughout Oregon in peril. It's so important during this time of uncertainty that we communicate with each other and support one another.
- It's equally important that we communicate what's going on to boards, friends, patrons, local

See Nan Heim page 20



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WHY DO IT?  
*why do it?*

The OLA's legislative agenda is based on the belief that libraries are key to providing fair and equitable access to information in the 21st century and a dedication to lifelong learning.

By the year 2000, critical information policy decisions will have been made at the national, state and local levels that will impact profoundly libraries of all kinds and the publics they serve. As the nation moves to build an information superhighway, the public good will be best served by ensuring that some fundamental information values and ethics guide its development.

OLA will mount vigorous, long-term efforts to educate and inform the profession, the public, and policy makers about the issues and decisions facing them as we all move toward full implementation of the information

superhighway. Library educators must be involved in revising educational and research goals that enable and empower individuals to use information to the fullest extent. New continuing education and staff development opportunities for working professionals must be provided to prepare them to respond to the rapidly changing social and information environment. Local library staff must be supported in efforts to inform and involve the general public in substantive discussions related to their information future.

OLA will actively seek partnerships and coalitions to further its legislative agenda.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

*Intellectual Freedom*

Libraries and librarians uphold and protect the principles of intellectual freedom and the public's right to know by providing their users with ready and equal access to ideas and information that reflects the multiplicity of view points on which a democratic society depends.

Libraries and librarians are committed to providing access to information in all formats, including electronic formats and Internet connections, to the individuals they serve, particularly those who are barred from other access.

*Lifelong Learning and Literacy*

Libraries and librarians play key roles in encouraging children and young people to develop a lifelong interest in reading and learning, and in providing them with literacy skills that will enable them to be full participants in society.

Libraries serve as learning centers, assisting students and scholars in meeting educational objectives, and

supporting people of all ages in their lifelong pursuit of self-education.

*Equitable Access*

Equal, ready and equitable access to information must be protected for all.

Full access is possible only when all of the public has full intellectual participation: sufficient awareness of the importance of information, a genuine say in the critical decisions related to information and sufficient education to transform information.

Libraries are the most logical and effective mechanisms to provide the broadest range of government information, nationally, statewide and locally, in every community; and libraries will urge the government to affirm its obligation to create and widely distribute government information as a necessary resource for participation in a democratic society.

*Stewardship of Public Resources*

Libraries serve the public interest by being economical, credible, locally-based points of access for traditional and new information formats and services.

Libraries and librarians are committed to resource sharing and partnerships that promote equity of access to information.

Libraries, the foundations of our nation's information infrastructure, make significant contributions to other national, state and local programs to further societal goals.

Librarians' unique expertise in selecting, analyzing, organizing, preserving, and distributing information in all formats is a significant resource for making the emerging information environment meaningful and accessible to the public.

**LEGISLATIVE AGENDA: 1996-2001**

To fulfill these principles, OLA has identified the following areas for emphasis in the next six years.

*Intellectual Freedom*

Legislation: OLA will support specific legislation that reaffirms libraries' role in providing wide access to information, and it will oppose specific measures that could restrict this access.

Ballot Measures: OLA will oppose any measures that can lead to censorship, and will support any measures that reaffirm and protect the principles of intellectual freedom.

*Lifelong Learning and Literacy*

Children's "Ready to Read" Grants: OLA will work to increase state aid to children in order to support libraries in their mission to advance literacy and contribute to lifelong learning for children.

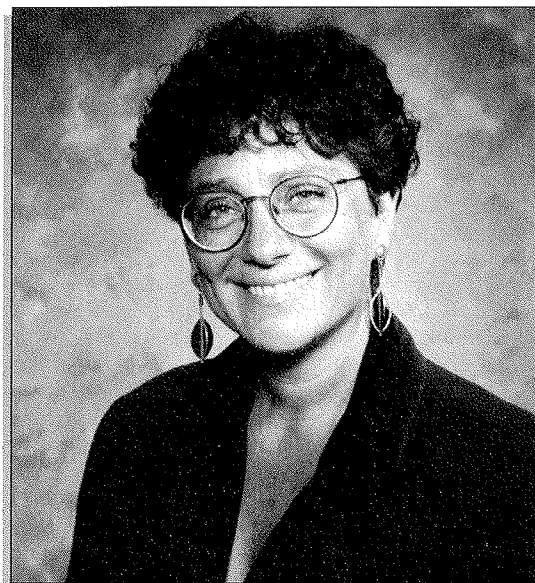
*See Agenda page 20*

**Oregon Library Association  
Legislative Agenda**

*1995/96 Library Development  
and Legislation Committee*

# Coming of Age with the OCA

by Deborah L. Jacobs  
Corvallis-Benton County Library District



Deborah Jacobs

Now that Lon Mabon and the Oregon Citizens Alliance have left us alone for an electoral season, I am rested enough to celebrate. Celebrate? Yes, we can all celebrate that they came and we, the library community of Oregon, not only "won," but we toughened up and became great political and intellectual freedom fighters in the process. Of course, the OCA and their message of hatred and intolerance caused great pain and serious dissension within our state. They were frightening, well organized, and the threat they posed was serious. And, if all this weren't enough, they came after our books and our libraries.

In the process of fighting the OCA's threat, we not only developed politically, but were forced to refine our thinking, develop strategically, and build better coalitions and collaborative relationships. And as a side benefit, the battle also inspired us to truly diversify our collections and become more inclusive institutions for the entire community. During the past five years we discovered the playing field had shifted significantly. Intellectual Freedom is no longer simply an intellectual exercise. And we discovered that political involvement, when the issues deeply impact libraries, is our moral responsibility.

## BECOMING AWARE

For years, the Oregon Library Association debated the level of its involvement in the political arena. Elsewhere in this issue is an article describing our successful efforts with the Legislature. But, as of 1991, OLA as an organization had not been involved in a statewide election. We had heated discussions about whether or not we should get involved politically in the OCA debate. Some of us, including State Librarian Jim Schepke, were tenacious. We believed the OCA agenda of hate affected us in many ways, but our focus was on the obvious issue of censorship of library collections. While the OCA talked about its commitment to traditional family values, the library community had some "traditional values" of its own, like the right of free speech.

Meanwhile OLA's Intellectual Freedom Committee, under the leadership of Pat Grace and George Bell, began monitoring the OCA's proposed initiative which would have amended the Oregon Constitution to declare homosexuality as "abnormal and perverse." Language from the ballot measure stated: "State, regional, and local governments and their properties and monies shall not be used to promote,

encourage or facilitate homosexuality, pedophilia, sadism, or masochism." When the impact of this initiative became clear to OLA members, the debate about "should we or shouldn't we" involve ourselves quickly ended. The Oregon library community became energized and unified.

## SOUNDING THE ALARM

The Intellectual Freedom Committee initiated activities to alert association members, library staff, board members, and the general public of the impact of the proposed initiative on libraries, and to urge Oregonians not sign the initiative petitions which the OCA was circulating. Pat Grace wrote an article for the *Oregon Library News* which detailed the case against the initiative and sounded the alarm. He concluded the article by saying:

"Don't sign the petitions, campaign against the initiative, keep the library doors open to everybody, keep libraries as depositories of the widest possible diversity of views and modes of expression. TAKE THE OCA SERIOUSLY."

At the April 1992 OLA membership meeting there was unanimous approval of a resolution in opposition to the OCA. This action became the foundation for OLA's subsequent herculean efforts.

OLA's worst fears about the OCA and its agenda were given substance when an OCA-sponsored ordinance, similar to the statewide initiative, was passed in Springfield. In addition to a City Council member asking for a list of recent acquisitions, Scott Lively (the OCA's then-communication director) was quoted as saying:

"We're going to show that the rhetoric used by our opponents regarding banning books was nothing more than fear-mongering. But, if we

*how to do it!*

find that a book about homosexual lifestyle like *Heather Has Two Mommies* is in a library, we will do everything we can to get it out of there.”

Well, we might have been missing something, but this clearly sounded like book banning to us! OLA was activated and held simultaneous press conferences in Corvallis, Portland, and Springfield and a news release was issued statewide. During the press conferences librarians urged the public not to sign the initiative petitions and detailed concerns about what could happen if the measure passed. The press conferences and the news release were widely reported by both print and broadcast media. Thus OLA's name became recognized for its quality response to this challenge and the issues of intellectual freedom and library materials were permanently injected into the campaign by a credible source - librarians - who the public trusted in such issues.

#### DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY

The OLA Executive Board held its annual two-day retreat to plan activities for the coming year. This was my year as OLA president and I thought I had a full year-long agenda – and this was before the OCA. In spite of this, OLA decided to put off everything until after the election and focus purely on defeating the OCA initiative. All committee, division, and round table efforts were to be focussed on this one area. Three key groups (Intellectual Freedom Committee, Public Relations, and Social Responsibilities Round Table) were given direction to develop an action, or, if you will, battle plan. A special budget item of \$1,000 was appropriated for the effort.

A statewide coalition of groups and organizations was formed to raise funds and campaign against the measure. OLA decided to maintain a liaison with the coalition but wage its own effort against Measure 9, based on the threat to intellectual freedom and the integrity of libraries. While this decision was naive, our effectiveness was exceptional.

#### IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

A series of low-cost, but high-visibility activities was planned and executed during the summer and fall months leading to the November election.

- Space was purchased in the Oregon Voters' Pamphlet. OLA's statement stressed the potential for a purge of homosexual authors if Measure 9 were to pass, and it listed about 40 prominent authors whose writings might be subject to removal from library shelves.
- The Board of Trustees of the Oregon State Library adopted a resolution in opposition to Measure 9. The resolution stressed that the Board has a "responsibility to oppose censorship and protect and promote intellectual freedom in libraries throughout the state of Oregon." The resolution was mailed to all Friends and Trustees groups in the state, along with a cover letter urging them to

adopt a similar resolution, and then to seek news media reports of their action. More than 20 groups responded.

- A letter to the editor was mailed to every daily and weekly newspaper in the state. The letter said in part: "The notion of evaluating literature on the basis of the writer's sexual orientation would be laughable if it were not so dangerous. Intellectual freedom has always been the cornerstone of libraries in our country. Discrimination against any group or segment of Oregonians has no place in our society. Or in our libraries."
- The OLA Legislative Committee published a flyer describing appropriate anti-measure 9 activities for Association members. It proved a useful tool for library workers wanting to get involved and to do what they could against the measure.
- The October 1992 issue of the *Oregon Library News* was given over entirely to the subject of Measure 9. The issue gave members of the library community an opportunity to explore aspects of the controversy they might not have otherwise considered.
- As the library community asserted its position, news coverage and editorial comment increased dramatically, especially in the month just prior to the election. The *Oregonian* ran a major story in which the issue of library censorship was thoroughly explored.
- The highlight and culminating activity of the OLA campaign was a rally and march through downtown Portland a week before the election. More than 200 people – library staff, board members and library supporters – marched through downtown Portland chanting "RALLY FOR THE RIGHT TO READ...NO ON 9! NO ON 9!" To emphasize the message of potential censorship, marchers carried books such as Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, that could be banned under the language of Measure 9. The march ended at the entrance to the Multnomah County Library, where speeches were given by librarians, authors, bookstore owners, and representatives from the anti-Measure 9 coalition.

Measure 9 was defeated, 57% to 43%. The day after the election Lon Mabon was asked "what went wrong." In part, he said, "we shouldn't have gone after the books."

#### FOLLOWING THROUGH

In early 1993, the Intellectual Freedom Round Table of the American Library Association announced that its prestigious state program award was being presented to the OLA's Intellectual Freedom Committee. The award carried with it a commemorative plaque and a \$1,000 check (just the amount we spent!). The letter of notification said, in part:

"Not only does our Committee concur that OLA's IFC has galvanized support for intellectual freedom with the State Association, intervened with extraordinary effectiveness in an intellectual freedom crisis in Oregon, and created an effective model program which could be adopted by others, but it set a new standard of excellence for response to future threats to intellectual freedom."

Meanwhile the fight was continuing against the OCA, which now was promoting its initiatives on the local level. Many communities were now having their own "Sons of 9." Right in the middle of this fight came some more energizing and delightful news. The Oregon American Civil Liberties Union honored the "Librarians of Oregon" as the collective recipients of the E.B. MacNaughton Award. To quote from that award:

"Our most dedicated champions of free speech and intellectual freedom have been the librarians of Oregon who have resisted all efforts to restrict what we can read, hear, and see."

During the 1993 legislative session, many Oregon legislators stuck their necks out and supported gay-positive legislation. The OCA immediately announced plans to initiate recall petitions for all of these men and women. OLA again jumped into the fray. We initiated three actions:

1. We wrote letters to the legislators thanking them for their vote;
2. We wrote letters to the editors in their local communities thanking the legislators for being defenders of the First Amendment and thus protecting libraries; and
3. We honored each of the legislators at the end of the session with a certificate of appreciation.

These actions in defense of our elected officials were greatly appreciated and have been remembered.

#### STAYING ALERT

The OLA has continued its activity in the state-wide arena. In 1994, we again fought the OCA as well as Ballot Measure 19, a censorship initiative. The lessons we learned in 1992 have served us well in subsequent elections. This year, in spite of the OCA not being on the ballot, we worked hard to defeat three measures. We were successful with Ballot Measures 31 and 46, but unfortunately not with Ballot Measure 47. In addition to submitting information for the Voter's Pamphlet, OLA members wrote position papers and letters to the editor, and held discussions throughout the state. Although not many people attended the sessions, the position papers, letters to the editor, and coalitions with other groups were successful activities in informing the library community and citizens about the impact of these issues on libraries.

Members of OLA have also started a political action committee – People for Oregon Libraries. While the PAC is an entity totally separate from OLA, it provides an endorsement and financial contribution to candidates for the state legislature who are supportive of libraries and the tenets of intellectual freedom. The PAC also endorses local library measures and can provide support on ballot measure initiatives.

We learned many lessons during the past five years. As noted elsewhere – we've learned through experience how to "stay safe in the political arena." We have also become extraordinarily vigilant about making sure our library collections are diverse. We learned that the best way to negate the OCA is to work in an "inclusive" manner with people who might fall for the OCA's hate-mongering. We've learned to stay focussed on issues that are about us – books, libraries and censorship – thus not diluting our message. We became a strong and essential partner to other coalitions in Oregon. Now, anytime a campaign committee is formed, OLA is always asked to participate – to have a "library voice at the table." And finally – by staying true to ourselves and our mission – we have kept our reputation as people who are guardians of democracy. As the ACLU said in its award to the "Librarians of Oregon":

"The Librarians ... have been the courageous guardians of ideas and information throughout a barrage of political pressure brought to focus on them. Without their commitment to the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, without their commitment to the First Amendment, without their commitment to provide communities a refuge for intellectual freedom, the fundamental principle on which our nation rests would crumble."

To continue, we need all of your support, energy, and talent. And, in addition to you, we need you to enlist friends, board members, and library users. We have seen what happens when we are tenacious and focussed. We have built a strong foundation for the future. Now it is up to you. Just because the OCA has folded its tent is no reason to become lax. Issues and events abound, ranging from the staggering and growing repercussions of Ballot Measure 47 to the remaining battle over the Internet and the Communications Decency Act. In spite of how often it's quoted, Thomas Jefferson remains poignantly relevant – "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." ☐

#### NOTE

Some of the information found in this article originally appeared in articles written by George Bell and Patrick Grace.

*Deborah L. Jacobs is the director of the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library and former president of OLA. Interested in learning more about how to get politically involved in OLA or in People for Oregon Libraries? Please contact Deborah at [jacobsd@peak.org](mailto:jacobsd@peak.org)*

Threats to the diversity of collections, and the basic state funding of libraries have continually pushed the Oregon Library Association (OLA) to increase its political involvement. In the 1990s, OLA took its involvement further and actively participated in a heated statewide election on gay rights. This time our political activity potentially jeopardized the association's tax status and credibility. Rather than continue to tempt fate, OLA decided to examine its political role and develop the means to be effective and confident in the political arena.

## Staying Effective and Safe in the Political Arena

by Janet Webster

Oregon State University's  
Hatfield Marine Science Center Library

In late summer 1994, 1994/95 OLA president Anne Billeter, appointed a special committee to examine OLA's political activity and to propose a mechanism for keeping the association politically effective while legally safe. Specifically, OLA leadership wanted to accomplish two goals:

- Permit members of the Oregon library community to engage with pressing civil liberties issues that affected their professional responsibilities.
- Insulate individual OLA members against possible recrimination from local government officials or voters who might hold contrary views to the OLA.

The committee's seven members included George Bell (chair of the State Library Board of Trustees), Deb Carver (president of OLA 1995/96 and head of Public Services at the University of Oregon), Deborah Jacobs (president of OLA 1992/93 and director of the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library), Nan Heim (OLA's lobbyist), Jim Scheppke (president of OLA 1990/91 and State Librarian), Ed House (president of OLA 1996/97 and director of the Albany Public Library), Janet Webster (OLA Parliamentarian and librarian of Oregon State University's Hatfield Marine Science Center Library). Other OLA members were valuable resources: Judy Harold (children's librarian of the Springfield Public Library), Michael Gaston (director of the Siuslaw Public Library), Carol Hildebrand (director of the Eugene Public Library), Sheila Wilma (director of the North Bend Public Library). After 15 months of work, our recommendations were adopted by the OLA Executive Board and incorporated into the association's procedure manual.

### THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee addressed the constraints on the political activity of public employees, constraints on the political activity of non-profit associations, and constraints within the association. We sought out models from other state library associations and professional associations in Oregon. We gained familiarity with tax law through research and consultation with a lawyer conversant with non-profit law. State

officials supplied interpretations of state law. OLA members were informed of the committee's progress through verbal reports to the Executive Board, a formal presentation at the annual meeting, and occasional written pieces in *The OLA Hotline*. The Committee crafted five general recommendations that cover OLA's tax status, its relationship to the library-focused political action committee (PAC), long range planning, and the roles of the Legislative Committee and leadership.

### OLA'S TAX STATUS

When originally incorporated, OLA selected the 501(c)(3) status, the most common one for community groups involved with educational and charitable functions. A strong advantage of this status is the ability to receive deductible contributions (including membership dues). The disadvantages are the restrictions on (but not prohibition of) attempts to influence legislation including contacting legislators, urging the public to do so, and advocating adoption or rejection of legislation.

The IRS prohibits 501(c)(3) organizations from "participating in, or intervening in (including publishing or distributing statements) any political campaign on behalf of or against any candidate for public office" (Cumfer and Sohl, 1993). The 501(c)(3) organization may engage in nonpartisan analysis and study of a position, and publish results of the study as long as it does not advocate a position. The Internal Revenue Code also states that no "substantial part of the activities of a qualifying organization may constitute carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation" (Treas. Reg. sec. 1.501(c)(3)-1(c)). "Substantial" is a nebulous term open to interpretation (Goedert, 1993; Mancino, 1980). Some cases have specified that more than 5% of an organization's time and budget spent on lobbying is substantial. Substantial can also relate to the quality as well as the quantity of lobbying; highly visible and controversial issues increases the quality in IRS considerations (Cumfer and Sohl, 1993). A clearer approach is to choose the lobbying election defined under section 501(h) of the Internal Revenue Code. This election uses a mathematical formula to establish monetary limitations on lobbying activities (Matoney et al., 1994). In this way, a 501(c)(3) organization can still be politically active if its primary mission is charitable or educational.

Splitting OLA into a 501(c)(3) and a (c)(4), a social welfare organization, would have allowed a wider range of political activity as long as it was funded by the (c)(4). The split would have complicated the budgeting and funding of the entire association. Rather than split an existing status, the Committee calculated the association's lobbying expenditures using limits outlined in the IRS Lobbying Election and found that it fell within the allowable limits. OLA's tax status is appropriate as long as OLA is primarily involved in promoting charitable activities, keeps its political activity in balance, and avoids endorsing or campaigning for political candidates.

## *Testifying to a Legislative Committee: Don't Panic!*

OLA members have presented testimony on a wide range of bills, from opposing nude dancing bans to supporting school media specialists. The first time you sit in front of a committee is hardest. After you escape grilling, mere embarrassment or sometimes even praise, you can reflect that you probably were pretty articulate and convincing, especially if you followed Nan Heim's tips. Even if you stumbled a bit, most legislators appreciate hearing from constituents and seeing that they care. Nan and her colleagues will prepare you to testify by letting you know who is a friend on the committee and what issues are of particular interest. Keep the following tips in mind when testifying.

- Prepare a short summary of your testimony, no more than two minutes. Legislative committees are most likely to be attentive to short, concise remarks. Give your longer remarks if asked.
- Include good anecdotes that put your arguments in human terms.
- Be positive and emphasize the effects of the bill or budget on "real people".
- Don't be afraid of your convictions.
- Talk from your statement rather than reading. This is easier if you practice saying it aloud to yourself at least three times.
- Be prepared to respond to questions.
- Avoid repeating what previous speakers have said, unless you are obviously emphasizing their points.
- Sign in as you arrive so the staff know who and how many want to testify.
- Prepare enough copies of your summary and full testimony to present to the committee and staff.
- Well-informed "real people", rather than paid staff can be the most convincing witnesses. That doesn't mean librarians are not convincing. But, think about some of your volunteers, board members and library users as possible witnesses to support library legislation.

We filed the lobbying election form, IRS Form 5768, and the Executive Board regularly reviews its record-keeping to adequately track lobbying expenditures.

### **THE PAC, PEOPLE FOR OREGON LIBRARIES**

Political Action Committees can solicit contributions from a wide audience and give directly to candidates' campaigns and ballot measures, activities a 501(c)(3) cannot do without losing its tax exempt status and paying severe fines. The People for Oregon Libraries was formed in the 1980s and, in a modest way, visibly supports pro-library candidates and local library issues. The PAC has not always been a consistent voice on more general political issues with potential impact on libraries. The Committee emphasized the need for a strong, vocal PAC that could put money into campaigns and ballot measures while keeping an arm's length from the Association. Individuals should be encouraged to support the PAC both financially with annual, personal contributions and philosophically through input on what stances to take. While a formal link cannot be made, lines of communication between the two organizations should be as open as possible.

### **LONG RANGE PLANNING**

Legislative planning session by session is unrealistic; issues can develop quickly during a legislative session and long range planning is displaced by crisis management. When the Committee recommended the creation of a six year plan, the OLA Legislative

Committee quickly responded with a plan that states guiding principles to direct legislative action and stances. (See the agenda beginning on page 6.) The principles include intellectual freedom, lifelong learning and literacy, equitable access and stewardship of public resources. OLA's leadership anticipates using the plan to educate the membership on key issues, to garner support for emerging issues, to make decisions, and to address late-breaking hot issues.

### **THE ROLE OF OLA'S LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

Specific tasks are required to successfully carry out our political activity. The committee identified several: communicate regularly with the membership on key issues and the political process; write and file ballot measure statements for the Oregon Voter's Pamphlet when appropriate; organize one session at every annual conference that addresses OLA's role in politics; organize and participate in a statewide network to contact legislators; organize a biennial Legislative Day. These tasks, while obvious to experienced members of the Legislative Committee, need to be documented for new and future members. Often, association history resides in the memories of a few long-timers, inhibiting others from taking action or being fully involved in association activities. Recording procedures extends the institutional memory to all members. Political momentum requires delegating specific tasks; documentation provides a mechanism for this.

## *Suggested Guidelines for Safe Political Action*

1. Use your home address when joining your state library association. This directs political mailings from the association to your home rather than your office.
2. Consider getting a personal e-mail address for your political and legislative activities rather than using your institutional one.
3. Familiarize yourself with information provided by your association on political activity.
4. Discuss your political involvement with your supervisor and your governmental attorney to clarify how your institution interprets political involvement. Include specific political actions you are considering taking:
  - wearing a political button at work.
  - writing letters to legislators.
  - writing letters to the local newspapers.
  - appearing as a spokesperson in the media.
  - calling legislators.
  - giving testimony at the Legislature.
  - attending Association Legislative Committee meetings.
  - attending Association events where political action is discussed.

Clarify activities that are considered part of your work and those that must be done on vacation time. Identify when institutional equipment, supplies and postage may be used.

5. Have your library board or governing body adopt the Association's Legislative Plan so they understand your political involvement and its impact on the library. With that approval, you may be able to promote the agenda during working hours.
6. Work with your government or institutional attorney to clarify what limits are placed on library board members as they become more engaged in lobbying activities.
7. Provide information to decision makers and the public on the issues. Make sure that any piece is informational and does not advocate a position. Clear the piece with your governing body.
8. Invite decision makers and legislators to your library. Inform them of current programs and long-range plans. Explain how you use public funds.
9. Do not use any of your institutional equipment, staff or material – your office, telephone, copy machine, fax machine – for a partisan political purpose.
10. Donate to your association's political action committee to ensure the library community is represented in front-line political activity.

One of these tasks directly addresses the issues of constraints on political activity by public employees. Distributing guidelines for appropriate political action is essential to help members feel comfortable in the political arena. Guidelines include the mundane such as using a home address for membership mailings so any political information stays out of the office. (See guidelines at left.) They can also cover the latest interpretation from the state Attorney General on when an appointed board member can take a political position. Guidelines provide a mechanism to open the conversation on political activity. Each member can use them to clarify situations before becoming involved rather than justifying political activity after the fact. Regular communication with the membership, such as distributing the guidelines, keeps the issues and the process in front of the membership, slowly increasing participation in political activity.

### **THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP**

Finally, the OLA Executive Board must lead the membership into the political arena. The membership trusts its leadership to "do the right thing." The Board needs to reflect on its actions rather than make them in a knee jerk manner. Objectively reviewing the issues includes asking questions such as these: 1) Does the issue increase or decrease the library community's ability to preserve free access to information for all?; 2) Is the issue relevant to the need to sustain the necessary resources for providing information (Berninghausen, 1972)? Public stances by OLA should relate to the core values of the library community and should avoid issues on the fringe of the interests and principles of libraries (Bendix, 1970). This does limit collective political activity on some issues that individual members may have strong feelings about as individuals. Leadership needs to emphasize the difference between individual political action and that of the association (White, 1989).

The leadership must also be willing to act quickly as issues and events unfold during the course of an election or legislative session. If the groundwork has been laid, such action should be straightforward. The membership will be supportive if the general principles have been discussed with them earlier. The Executive Board will consult with the lobbyist, deciding quickly on stance and strategy. The players will know what roles to assume. This smooth reaction takes practice as well as trust, and while effective, must be constantly monitored. OLA authorizes its leaders to be politically active as OLA officers; consequently, all expenses incurred must be recorded as lobbying costs.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The OLA has affirmed its commitment to political activity by adopting the recommendations of its special committee. But, being politically effective and legal is a never ending process. All OLA members

*See Staying Safe page 21*

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# Senate Bill 20:

## *How a Good Idea Became a Law*

by Jim Scheppke  
Oregon State Library

116 SB 20

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**W**hen you take a tour of the State Capitol you might walk away with a handout describing "how an idea becomes a law." It explains the Oregon legislative process with a lot of neat boxes, arrows and cute cartoon figures. It makes it look easy.

Well, this is the story of how a good idea really became a law. Senate Bill 20, the Oregon LINK library resource sharing bill, passed in 1993. It was, and remains, the most significant piece of Oregon library legislation since state aid for public libraries was first enacted in the 1970's. The story of SB 20 is an interesting one. Like a lot of important legislation, it was a real nail-biter. It took a lot of help from a lot of different people: legislators, lobbyists, librarians and library supporters to make it happen. Others might have seen it differently, but here's how it happened from my vantage point.

### **THE CALL**

On Saturday, July 31, 1993, I thought my 1993 legislative session was over. The legislators were meeting through the weekend, determined to wrap up their most pressing business and get out of town. We had passed a few of our library bills in the session, but not the most important one, SB 20.

That Saturday morning was when I got the call. The voice on the other end was excited. It was one of OLA Lobbyist Nan Heim's associates. The House Appropriations Committee was meeting that afternoon. And SB 20 was not dead.

In fact, SB 20 was on the agenda for the Committee's afternoon work session. This was a huge surprise, because it seemed certain that SB 20 was finished, at least for the 1993 session. The bill had passed the Senate, run by the Democrats that year, but it had stalled out in the Republican-controlled House. There had been a nasty break-up of the Ways and Means Committee, normally a joint committee made up of House and Senate members, into two separate appropriations committees. The bill was bottled up in the House, and there we expected it to die.

But, SB 20 had one last shot that Saturday. I got into my suit and tie, and rushed to the Capitol. The bill was already being discussed when I got there. Representative Ted Calouri from Beaverton spoke favorably of the bill and there was no real opposition. A deal had been struck, as often is the case, before the work session. The Chair of the Committee, Repre-

sentative John Minnis from Troutdale, gaveled the bill out of committee, but not before adding an amendment, a sunset clause that would mean the 1995 Legislature would have to look at the issue again.

Even with the addition of the sunset clause, those of us there were jubilant, because we knew our major goal for the 1993 session had been achieved. The vote a few days later in the full House and Senate was a foregone conclusion. In carrying the bill on the House floor, Representative Calouri stated, "This is a good deal for local libraries and a good deal for the State Library."

The "good deal" was a resource sharing program for Oregon libraries, including a network of reference referral centers and reimbursement for libraries that loaned more materials to other libraries than they borrowed. This would be financed with federal dollars that were freed from the State Library budget. The federal dollars in turn were to be replaced with an "assessment" on state agencies that were served by the State Library. It was an ingenious financing scheme, because it didn't require additional dollars from the General Fund. It actually saved some General Fund dollars. This financing idea was probably the biggest factor in SB 20's success. But where did the idea come from? The fact is, the idea at the core of SB 20 came out of nowhere.

### **THE GIFT**

The idea of financing the State Library through an assessment on state agencies that used the State Library came unannounced and unsolicited. It arrived in a report from a subcommittee appointed by Governor Barbara Roberts. Intended or not (and we may never know), it was a gift.

When Barbara Roberts became Governor in 1991, Ballot Measure 5 had just passed, meaning big changes were in store for state government. One of her responses to this was to undertake a comprehensive review of all state programs. Subcommittees were formed, comprised of state government officials and citizens, and agencies made lengthy presentations describing their programs and future plans. The State Library made its presentation and anxiously awaited the recommendations of the subcommittee.

One of the recommendations came as a complete surprise. It had not been part of our presentation, nor had it been discussed in our dealings with the subcommittee. But there it was in the final report: "Investigate using the central government service charge to finance state library operations."

It took us awhile to realize what a great idea this was. When we first thought about it, it seemed kind of scary. Having all state agencies pay us directly from their budgets for our services would mean we would be much more accountable for providing quality services to all of state government.

POLITICAL  
the results



We got the subcommittee report in December of 1991. The major recommendation for the State Library was to "restructure, move or combine functions with another agency." The agency that the Governor's staff had in mind was the Secretary of State's Office. This recommendation was one that the State Library Board strongly opposed, and we knew it would be the one that the Governor would work hardest to make happen. The other recommendations of the report would have to wait, while the State Library Board mobilized to resist the move to place the Library under the Secretary of State.

The idea that we might free up the LSCA funds for resource sharing, by replacing them with an assessment on our state government customers, might have languished, had it not been for an OLA-inspired planning initiative that was just starting to gear up at the end of 1991.

#### THE CHAMPION

What caused Senate Bill 20 to happen, more than anything else, was a textbook act of political involvement carried out by some librarians in Corvallis. It was the kind of involvement OLA Lobbyist Nan Heim has forever been goading reluctant librarians to engage in. In 1990, when Senator Cliff Trow of Corvallis was facing a tough re-election campaign, librarians were there to help, making phone calls, distributing campaign literature, raising some money: the usual grunt work of a political campaign. So when Mel George, Deborah Jacobs, and Pat Grace sat down with the newly re-elected Senator a month after the election, he was very receptive to what they had to say.

One of the things they had to say was that Oregon might benefit from a "blue ribbon committee" of legislators and citizens who would look at a broad range of issues relating to improving library services in the state. That idea stuck. Senator Trow thought it was an excellent idea. By the end of the meeting, librarians had a champion.

Senator Trow worked with OLA to try to pass a bill in the 1991 Legislative Session that would create a "blue ribbon committee" to look at library issues. When the bill failed, Senator Trow did not give up. He used his position on the Joint Interim Education Committee to create such a committee as part of the Interim Committee work plan for 1992.

The committee, chaired by Senator Trow, was made up of four legislators and ten citizens. Nine of the citizens were librarians: Fran Cardoza, Lynn Chmelir, Ginnie Cooper, Deanna Draper, Mel George, Deborah Jacobs, June Knudson, Jim Scheppke, and Maureen Sloan. The tenth member was Freda Vars from Corvallis, at the time a library trustee.

The "Joint Interim Committee on Education Work Group on Oregon Library Services" began meeting in February of 1992 and delivered a report on November 30th of that year. Leading the work of the

committee behind the scenes was an extraordinarily committed legislative staff member named Jan Borgen. In developing the plans that would lead to SB 20, it was Jan who first realized that using the idea that had been generated by the Governor's subcommittee on the Library was the key to achieving our resource sharing agenda. She saw right away that if we could deliver a proposal that did not require more state General Fund dollars, that we would have an excellent chance of success. Jan was dogged in her pursuit of the idea of instituting a state library assessment on state agencies that would free federal funds that could be used for library resource sharing purposes. It was Jan's work with budget analysts and other key players in the budget process that paved the way for SB 20.

#### THE SESSION

When SB 20 was introduced by Senator Trow at the beginning of the 1993 legislative session, it was one of four bills that the Joint Interim Education Committee process generated. But because it was the only one of the three that dealt with money, we knew it would be the toughest to pass.

The Oregon Library Association, led by President Deborah Jacobs and Legislative Committee Chair Carol Hildebrand, did an excellent job of mobilizing the OLA membership to get behind SB 20 and the other three bills. OLA Legislative Day that year was the biggest and best ever. Nan Heim and Jody Fischer were doing their usual outstanding work to facilitate and guide OLA's advocacy. The State Library Board, led by Anne Carter and George Bell, did their part to lobby for all the bills. Most importantly, our champion, Senator Trow was working hard to secure passage of SB 20.

Another Senator, Stan Bunn of Newberg, helped us see that the bill's chances would be strengthened if the assessment on state agencies could be phased in over two state biennia, rather than trying to do it in one biennium. With OLA's support, Bunn sponsored an amendment to SB 20 in the Ways and Means Committee that would accomplish the phase-in. The amendment solidified support in the Senate. SB 20 passed the Oregon Senate in May of 1993 by a unanimous vote.

The House was another matter, but thanks to determined efforts by Nan Heim and many OLA members, the bill was rescued in the last days of the session as I have recounted above. The final House vote on SB 20, in August 1993, was also unanimous. The sunset clause that was added by the House Appropriations Committee caused us a great deal of uncertainty and nervousness over the next two years. But when we got to the next session of the Legislature in 1995, the bill to remove the sunset clause sailed through the process without any real difficulty. The heavy lifting had already been done in the 1993 session.

*See Law page 21*

## Postscript: How a Good Law Stayed a Law

As Jim mentioned in his story on Senate Bill 20, the original bill contained a sunset clause. The 1995 Legislative Session saw a flurry of activity to repeal this clause so LINK would live on. Here is the short, but sweet, history of HB 2172 (retold with additions from OLA Hotline 1(11)).

### OLA LEGISLATIVE DAY

Activities on January 19th focused on LINK as OLA members from around the state visited legislators and staff.

### HOUSE HEARING

HB2172 went first to a House Committee chaired by Rep. Dennis Luke (R-Bend) who was very supportive. Jim Scheppke, George Bell and Nan Heim met with every committee member. At the hearing January 20, OLA members, including Anne Billeter and Deborah Jacobs, testified in support of HB 2172. The committee voted a unanimous "do pass".

### HOUSE VOTE

OLA members answered a Network Alert by contacting their Representatives to support HB 2172. It passed the House 59 to 0 on January 28, with Rep. Barbara Ross (D-Corvallis) carrying the bill.

### SENATE HEARING

HB2172 headed to a Senate Committee, which held a hearing February 16. We visited committee members, and Deb Carver put out an Alert for local contacts. Jim Scheppke and Carol Hildebrand testified and the committee voted a unanimous "do pass."

### WAYS & MEANS SUBCOMMITTEE

Once again, Jim, George and Nan made the rounds of committee members. On February 23, the subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Bob Montgomery (R-Hood River), heard HB2172 along with the State library's budget bill. Deb Carver, Deborah

Jacobs and Ed House testified. Sen. Shirley Stull (R-Keizer) moved the bill to full Ways & Means with another unanimous "do pass."

### FULL WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE:

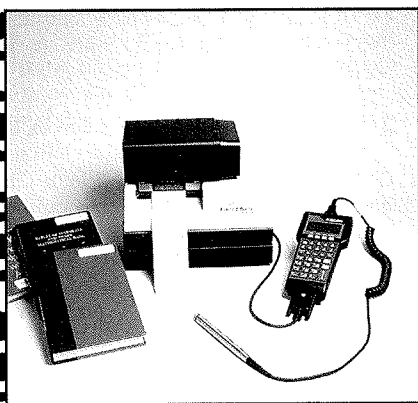
The full committee considered the bill on March 6. The co-chairs were both supportive, especially Denny Jones (R-Ontario). It once again passed out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation.

### SENATE VOTE

The Network did not have time to roll into action, but relied on previous hard work. Sen. Stull carried the bill to the Senate on March 7 where it passed with 30 ayes.

### GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE:

Governor Kitzhaber signed HB2172, allowing for the continuation and expansion of the successful LINK program.



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Examining the legislative and political history of Oregon's library community makes one wonder if there is anything new under the sun. Consider the following issues:

- The latest twist in per capita aid, "One to Get Ready: Read!," faces a tough time in Salem this coming session—a similar picture when the idea of state aid was introduced (and defeated) in the 1945 Legislature.
- Federal library funding legislation is passed at the last minute in 1996—reminiscent of the nascent

LSA legislation heatedly debated at an OLA Executive Board meeting in October, 1952.

- Threats to civil liberties stretch our perception of who we are as librarians and what we stand for—thoughts well articulated by Dr. Raymond Muse in his comments at the PNLA conference in 1956.

## Lessons from the Past

by Janet Webster  
Oregon State University's  
Hatfield Marine Science Center Library

- The library community is confronting property tax limitations—just as Nan Heim did during her debut as a lobbyist in 1978.
- We battle with censorship measures—as we did in 1983 with a failed bill that attempted to define community standards for dealing with obscene materials.

Librarians in Oregon are politically active. In the past, we did it best when focused on a common cause, and then tended to drift back to our local interests. In the 1990s, we work together continuously knowing that sooner or later, we all share the issues and the users. We have learned that there is strength in our community. But, we can still learn from past efforts on both the federal and state level.

### LIBRARY SERVICES ACT & STATE AID IN THE 1950s:

The original act, passed in 1956 as Public Law 597 of the Eighty-fourth Congress, authorized funds for "the extension of library facilities into rural areas" (Chaney, 1960). Rural was defined as areas with a population under 10,000. Authorization did not mean the funds were appropriated; the appropriation, whittled down from the original \$7.5 million to a little over \$2 million, came through later that year. Oregon's role in the passage of this historic legislation was prominent as Edith Green, one of our congress people of the day, became the bill's sponsor in the House of Representatives. The story of the political machinations are well covered in Holley and Schremser (1983). A letter announcing the increased appropriations the next year arrived from Edith Green to then OLA president, Cora Miller, and appeared in the July 1957 *Oregon Library News*.



Janet Webster

The OLA supported an ambitious state aid bill in 1955 that would have provided for the development and improvement of county and regional libraries. The proposed legislation resulted from a three-year study by OLA and included items besides funding: the appointment of an advisory board for grants, possible standards for grant recipients, local effort requirements, limits to amount of grants (Eaton, 1960). The bill failed, but a simpler one passed in 1957 appropriating state funds to match available federal ones.

### THE EXPANSION OF LSA TO LSCA IN THE 1960s:

Lyndon Johnson signed the Library Services and Construction Act into law on February 11, 1964 ending a long debate over the program's expansion. Part of that debate, the Senate segment, started shortly after 1:00 pm on November 22, 1963. Many of us vividly remember where we were when President Kennedy was assassinated; probably, few of us realize that legislation crucial to libraries was linked in time to this event. As Oregon's Senator Wayne Morse, the bill's sponsor, interrupted the proceedings to say: "I should like to interrupt a moment to say that if ever there was an hour when all America should pray, this is the hour" (Holley and Schremser, 1983), many of us were in shock.

The bill that had been facing serious challenges, particularly over the construction clause, sailed through after the debate was so abruptly postponed. Charlie Lee, a Congressional staff member, observed the following: "The bill passed as a memorial tribute to President Kennedy. It's a macabre association but it did save the construction authority. In a sense, every library in the country that was built or renovated since that time has been a partial Presidential library by implication" (Holley and Schremser, 1983). The 1964 LSCA provided funding for construction as well

as operations and lifted the rural restriction. The legislation was expanded further in 1966 to include interlibrary cooperation.

Back in Oregon, the library community kept working on streamlining the implementation of the LSA program and working towards more stable funding. It appears to have been a time of learning how to use federal programs to their best advantage. Yet, the 1960s also saw the establishment of OLA's Intellectual Freedom Committee, perhaps an indicator of a rise in challenges. Momentum started building in the later part of the decade for greater cooperation among all libraries. Planning was seen as critical to any organized effort for more state funding and broader guidelines; OLA and the State Library worked diligently on a statewide library network plan holding meetings throughout the state. The final plan was completed in 1969, laying the groundwork for legislative battles in the 1970s.

#### **THE 1970s STATE AID FOR LIBRARIES STRUGGLE:**

"Legislative bills to provide state aid to public libraries were introduced in the 1973, 1975, and 1977 sessions. Each attempted to provide some type of per capita funding along with development project grants aimed at cooperation among libraries for expanded services. The bills received friendly hearings from the education committees to which each were assigned. However, the funding priorities for the state from the general fund never seemed to extend to libraries when the bills reached the ways and means committees.... Per capita at \$0.25 per head and \$300,000 for development grants were the major monetary sections of the 1977 state aid bill. Administration of the program was to be through the Oregon State Library Board of Trustees assisted by an advisory group of public librarians. Again the early hearings were favorable, but the ways and means committee declined to include the per capita funding. However, the first state aid bill was passed and became law in July 1977" (Eaton, 1980). The 1977 legislation was a watershed. Building on this success, \$0.21 per capita funding was passed in 1979.

#### *Familiar strategies lead to these successes.*

- 1) OLA's Legislative and Development Committees (they were separate in the 1970s) worked in tandem on getting legislation drafted to provide state aid. This work gave OLA solid background on how the Legislature worked. It also made the committees' members realize that a professional lobbyist was needed, and Ms. Nina Cleveland was hired for the 1973 session.
- 2) Communicating the needs of Oregon's libraries to legislators was critical. Legislative candidates were surveyed, and contacted by local librarians. Position papers on state aid were composed and circulated.
- 3) OLA courted sympathetic legislators who would support the bill once it hit the floor.

"Not only have the librarians performed in their passive role as housekeepers of liberty, but they that have also played a very active role in the realm of civil liberties. While so many Americans in their sincere fear of totalitarianism, or in their zeal for political gain fed by this fear, have been making serious inroads upon the fundamental civil liberties, the librarians have been taking their position forthrightly and courageously on one of the great documents of Americanism, the Library Bill of Rights. ... They have not only performed their professional obligation of defending and preserving the First Amendment, but they have discharged a civic duty and an intellectual imperative as well in exercising the liberties guaranteed therein. ...

As Judge Learned Hand ably stated it, "Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; if it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can ever do much to help. While it lies there it needs no constitution, no law, no court to save it."

If this devotion to liberty on the part of our people perishes, librarianship as you understand it will have passed from the land. You will become collectors, cataloguers and disseminators of propaganda rather than the librarians of a free people."

— Raymond Muse  
"Civil Liberties and the Librarian."  
PNLA Quarterly 21(2):(1957): 78-84.

- 4) Extensive outreach was conducted to the League of Oregon Cities and the Association of Oregon Counties. OLA exhibited at each group's annual meeting and prepared a resolution supporting state aid that librarians could use with their local governments.
- 5) OLA met with the interim committee on local government during the 1975-1977 lull. This contact prompted the committee to draft the 1977 legislation as a committee bill.
- 6) OLA's Legislative Committee organized a legislative network in the fall of 1976. The group included librarians, trustees, members of the American Association of University Women, civic leaders, and local officials.
- 7) At annual conferences in the 1970s, sessions on state aid and legislative workshops were common elements.

#### **UPS AND DOWNS IN THE 1980s:**

Oregon libraries made gains on issues other than funding while always fighting to preserve state fund-

## Landmarks in the Oregon Library Political Arena

- 1945: OLA supports the State Aid Bill which fails.
- 1955: A measure providing that all State Library Board members be appointed passes the legislature as does one permitting establishment of regional public library boards.
- 1956: Library Services Act passes Congress.
- 1957: Mrs. Eugene Kelty, the first OLA legislative representative is employed.
- 1963: Library Services and Construction Act passes Congress with outstanding support from Wayne Morse, Maurine Neuberger, Edith Green, Robert Duncan and Al Ullman.
- 1971: Legislature allocates all LSCA funds to the operation of the State Library even though OLA objects.
- 1973: Ms. Nina Cleveland is hired as first paid lobbyist. Laws are passed allowing the formation of library districts along school and community college district boundaries.
- 1975: ORS Chapter 357 is completely revised. SB444, giving some protection to libraries from prosecution under obscene publications laws, passes the Legislature. Laws are passed allowing the formation of library districts in metropolitan areas.
- 1977: State Aid passes the Legislature.
- 1978: Nan Heim is hired as OLA's lobbyist.
- 1979: State Aid amended to include per capita.
- 1983: Per capita is cut.
- 1985: OLA sponsors its first Legislative Day with an ice cream social in the capitol.
- 1986: The political action committee forms.
- 1987: Per capita assistance increases 30%.
- 1992: Measure 5 passes limiting the tax rates for cities and counties. OLA helps defeat Measure 9 which would have limited the civil liberties of gays and lesbians.
- 1993: Oregon LINK passes the Legislature.
- 1995: The LINK project is expanded and its sunset clause removed.
- 1996: Measure 47 passes.

ing. The Public Records Law Exemption for Library Circulation Records passed in 1981 thanks to support from the OLA Legislative Network. The 1983 session was brutal. Oregon was in the midst of a major recession, and libraries were looking at shrinking budgets as was the state. So, Governor Atiyeh recommended cutting all per capita funding and replacing it with LSCA funds. OLA opposed this and had difficulty explaining the intricacies of general funds, federal funds and local responsibility to legislators intent on reducing local assistance programs (Stephenson, 1983). While per capita was cut, it was not zeroed out and OLA could claim a partial victory in a hard fought battle. Besides funding, the 1983 session saw the passage of a bill allowing cities to appoint library boards and the tabling of an obscenity bill that would have provided for local rather than state standards for measuring obscene materials.

Things did improve as the decade wore on and OLA got even more active. OLA held its first legislative day with an ice cream party during the 1985 National Library Week, the beginning of an important political tradition. The next year, at the OLA Conference, Donna Selle solicited the first contributions to the Oregon Library PAC, now the People for Oregon Libraries, and Carol Hildebrand wrote about it in the *PNLA Quarterly* (Hildebrand, 1990).

### LESSONS

All this activity over the decades leads into our actions of the 1990s. We are not creating new strategies to be politically effective; we are using the tried and true ones of talking to people, articulating our needs, participating in the democratic process. History shows we can accomplish our goals, but there will always be frustrations and setbacks sprinkled in with the successes. **Q**

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## Trustees

(continued from page 2)

ifies for membership. Checks should be addressed to People for Oregon Libraries, and mailed to Deborah Jacobs, 2995 NW Royal Oaks Drive, Corvallis, OR 97330.

3. **Be an Advocate.** Trustees must assert themselves politically for libraries on local and state levels. We can speak out about issues in situations where it would be awkward or risky for the library staff to be vocal. Our opinions about library services will carry weight with neighbors and friends. We should speak up at service clubs and neighborhood associations. We should talk with our newspaper editor and call in to local radio talk shows to make sure the community understands library issues. We should get involved in campaigns of candidates for public office.

As librarians have been compelled to become politically active by emergent issues in recent years, so

must trustees take on a more active role in our democratic processes in Oregon. To do otherwise, to continue to take a passive posture, is to deprive a library of a valuable and increasingly necessary asset: the ability to compete politically.

We trustees must throw our hats in the ring! **Q**

### ENDNOTES

1. In the interests of economy, the term "trustee" is used throughout to refer to advisory board members as well.
2. ORS 265.232 is too broadly written and is misapplied to volunteer citizen boards and commissions.

*George H. Bell is a member of the Salem Public Library Advisory Board. He is a former trustee of the Oregon State Library. In 1995, OLA made him an Honorary Life Member.*

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## Big Teeth

(continued from page 4)

In my childhood, the effect of this story on me was so strong that on those evenings I had to run through the Dark Woods from my friend's house, I knew the wolf was hot on my heels. I also knew he was tricky; to look back offered him an opportunity to sneak ahead of me.

Thus, when I finally came upon other versions of Little Red Riding Hood, the ones where the hunter saves both the girl and the granny, I was shocked. What a difference that hunter makes! Quite simply, he makes all the difference in the world. The hunter comes, sees, and conquers only to disappear, perhaps into another tale where his services are needed.

Tales such as Little Red Riding Hood exist in "once upon a time." They serve us well there. But, sometimes, we can bring tales out of the timeless and, guided by their lessons or the emotions they evoke, enliven them to better make sense of our own time. My current readings of Little Red Riding Hood remind me that I meet symbolic and stereotypical wolves daily. If I can draw something from the tale, it would be to remember to use the hunter's quali-

ties to battle the wolves at the library's door. The hunter is the one who was so ready that he appeared to be only passing by. The one who knew pretense and disguise. The one whose knife of deliverance was sharp, timely, and true. The one who was so prepared as well as so right in his actions that we feel no regret for his adversary. (What is a mere wolf anyway?) The one who would save Red Riding Hood and her hopes. **Q**

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*Brian Bond is the children's services librarian at the Coos Bay Public Library and OLA Children's Division past-president.*

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*Plan on coming to Salem on February 26 for OLA's Legislative Day.*

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## Nan Heim

*(continued from page 5)*

elected officials, and legislators. Do not assume that people know about the potential impacts of Measure 47 on your library!

- This is a good time to ask your patrons, perhaps through a survey, what kind of service they want. It's also an excellent time for a story in your local newspaper.
- To communicate to others, you need to know what's going on. OLA's Legislative Committee will make an extra effort in the months ahead to keep you informed. At the same time, you need to keep on top of what's happening in your community and share it with us. Good news or bad, let us know, so we can share the information with others and use it to build a case for library revenue.
- The narrow passage of Measure 47 is not a mandate for anything except perhaps property tax relief. It is most certainly not a mandate for wholesale cuts in library services! ❏

## OLA Legislators of the Year

OLA has always seen the wisdom of acknowledging our friends. The Legislative and Development Committee selects legislators who have been particularly supportive of OLA's legislative agenda. Listed below are members of Congress who helped Oregon's as well as the nation's libraries and members of the Oregon Legislature who have protected freedom of speech, championed new ways of financing library services, and improved the quality of library services for Oregonians.

Edith Green*	Wayne Morse*
Mark Hatfield*	Stan Bunn
Joyce Cohen	Darlene Hooley
Denny Jones	Bob Pickard
Frank Roberts	Cliff Trow

*\*Honorary Life Members*

## Agenda

*(continued from page 6)*

### *Equitable Access*

Electronic Information: OLA will actively participate in information public policy discussions taking place within the state in order to assure equitable access to electronic information.

Government Information: OLA will continue to support the state government's obligation to create and disseminate easy-to-use government information, readily available at no or low cost to the public, and outside the exclusive control of private interests.

### **STEWARDSHIP OF PUBLIC RESOURCES**

Resource Sharing: While continuing to support funding and development of Reference Referral Centers and Net Lender Reimbursement, OLA will work to secure funds for direct loan reimbursement.

Information Highway: OLA will seek ways, through legislation or other means, to enable even the poorest and most isolated libraries to connect to Internet

services. The goal is making every library an interconnected, information access point for the widest range of information seekers, particularly those who have no other way onto the information superhighway.

### **OTHER LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES**

State Library Funding: OLA will continue to support adequate funding for operation of the Oregon State Library.

Additional State Aid: OLA will continue to work towards increased state support of all types of libraries, including school, public and higher education libraries, in addition to supporting "Ready to Read" grants.

Other Legislative Initiatives: OLA will study and respond to any legislative initiatives that affect the ability of Oregon libraries to follow the Guiding Principles. ❏

## Staying Safe

(continued from page 12)

need to understand and follow the guidelines for safe political activity. The Executive Board needs to work within organizational limitations such as tax status, involve membership in the discussion of principles and political positions, and present a united library front to the rest of the world.

Limitations, if addressed and understood, need not hamper our political activity. They can lead to a better understanding of the political arena and what involvement really means. Differences in opinion precipitate confrontation and possibly a divided front. Open discussion is critical so our actions do not appear as a flight of fancy of the most liberal, vocal, or active of the members. Separating the political activity of individuals who happen to be librarians from the political activity of OLA reflects an understanding of roles and limitations.

We have many friends who support libraries on general principle. The OLA's commitment to be visible and articulate in the political arena will alienate some of those important friends. Though difficult to alienate part of a library's constituency, we must continue to focus on our values to succeed politically. Compromise may be necessary and works best if all sides bring commitment, vision and conviction to the arena.

The library community cannot afford to sit on the political sidelines in this day and age, when property tax measures may decimate budgets, or an angry citizens' group wants to limit who can read what, or opportunities for statewide cooperation emerge needing legislative approval. On the other hand, libraries cannot afford to lose credibility as broad, inclusive community institutions. The OLA is quite far along the political activity spectrum, and we are doing much to translate the core values of librari-

ship into political reality. But, we can all do more. And, we can do it right. **Q**

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*Janet Webster is the librarian at Oregon State University's Hatfield Marine Science Center Library and is OLA's Parliamentarian. She chaired the OLA Special Committee on Political Activity.*

## Law

(continued from page 14)

### THE LESSON

The events I have tried to describe here are already fading from my memory. More than anything, I wanted to recall the names of those who made SB 20 happen. I've tried to include the most important names here, but there were, of course, many others who made a phone call, testified at a hearing, wrote a letter, or came to Legislative Day. Everyone's efforts were important to our success.

But the key lesson to be learned from this story is the same one that Nan Heim has been trying to teach librarians and library supporters for years: Nothing happens without a champion, and it is up to us to make a legislator into a champion.

Had it not been for the fact that librarians in Corvallis were willing to spend a few hours to work in Senator Trow's campaign in 1990, SB 20 would probably never have happened. Had it not been for the fact that Mel George and Deborah Jacobs and Pat Grace made an effort to meet with Senator Trow in December of 1990 to discuss ways to improve library services in Oregon, SB 20 would probably never have happened.

The lesson of SB 20 is that to achieve major progress for libraries in Oregon, all of us in the library community need to be willing to engage in the political process. And if we can do that, there will be many more legislative victories to come. **Q**





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