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## Oklahoma MPLA Board Report

October 11, 2004

by Wayne Hanway, Oklahoma Library Association Representative

New Oklahoma City Downtown Library Open -- Hundreds of people crowded the street between the Oklahoma County Courthouse and the library August 17th to hear local and state officials -- including former Oklahoma City Mayor Kirk Humphreys and current first lady Kim Henry -- speak at the dedication and public opening of the \$24 million Ronald J. Norick Downtown Library.

Since the library project officially started 11 years ago, it ran into several costly delays. Most recently, there were three years of delays because of site issues and also because of a lawsuit over a subcontractor's delivery of exterior tiles.

Donna Morris, the library system's executive director, said that the library offers a greatly expanded book collection, an innovative children's area and high-speed Internet access. Interior design features include a four-story glass atrium and a wood-trimmed, 137-seat auditorium. The fourth floor includes classrooms and offices.

More than 3,000 people helped load thousands of books into the new building on Friday, August 13th during a ceremonial "passing" of the books.

The library is named for the former Oklahoma City mayor who spearheaded the downtown capital improvement plan that included the library and helped it gain the approval of city voters. It is the last of nine major projects that were approved in 1993.

### Literary Landmark Dedicated

Librarians, VIPs, trustees, friends, and others crowded the large Browsing Room of Oklahoma State University's Edmon Low Library on October 1, 2004, for the dedication of the library as a Literary Landmark, housing the papers of pioneering historian Angie Debo. Michael Wallis, award-winning author of Route 66 and numerous other books, presided. A highlight of the ceremony was Glenda Carlile, Director of the Oklahoma Center for the Book, in character as Angie Debo, acknowledging the honor.

### Planning for 2005 OLA Conference Well Underway

Oklahoma Library Association President Lynn McIntosh and Program Committee Chair Susan Dulaney Wright have got the planning for the 2005 annual conference moving along on schedule. The theme is "A New Spin @ Your Library." Among the presenters will be noted readers' advisor and model for the librarian action figure Nancy Pearl and MPLA President Beth Avery. OLA will be trying a new venue for the 2005 annual conference, at the U. S. Postal Service Training Center in Norman.

## Primer for New Legislators

The 2004 election will usher in a major turnover among Oklahoma state legislators, because the state's term limits law, which puts a 12-year limit on terms. Looking at the need to quickly inform new legislators about Oklahoma's libraries and their needs, the OLA Legislative Committee has printed a small booklet called "Libraries A to Z: A Primer" for distribution by librarians, trustees, and friends to legislators. For more information, contact OLA Executive Director Kay Boies ( [kboies@coxinet.net](mailto:kboies@coxinet.net) ).

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

- Oct. 29 - E-lectrify Your E-Resources! Integrating Electronic Resources Into Your Catalog, sponsored by the Technical Services and Technology & Electronic Resources Roundtables. At Stillwater Public Library.
- Dec. 10 - Spoken Arts for Teens @ Your Library, sponsored by the Children and Teen Services Roundtable. At the new Ronald J. Norick Library, in downtown Oklahoma City.