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## A Day in the Life: What Goes On at Libraries in Oregon

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# A Day in the Life:

## What Goes On at Libraries in Oregon

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It is amazing to hear about the different endeavors and projects that library employees are working on in Oregon libraries. However, it's just as amazing that you often never hear these stories. People who work in libraries tend not to be the greatest self-promoters, and often shy away from accolades. Not that there is a need to commemorate each time someone checks out a book, but when was the last time you gave your director or co-worker a high five, or celebrated the completion of a project in the same way that touchdowns get celebrated during football season?

At the 2003 OLA Conference, the Support Staff Division (SSD) sponsored a session called "Now It Can Be Told." A panel of librarians and library staff discussed the different roles they play in libraries. The roles were varied and challenging, from the director of a small public library who was equally at home wielding a broom or a budget proposal to a support staffer who spoke at international conferences. The panel presentations and subsequent discussion was lively and inspiring; since then, SSD has wanted to bring the excitement of that session to a wider audience.

In the last OLA Quarterly, President Leah Griffith wrote of a need to embrace and thrive on change. In this issue SSD presents snapshots of those who are doing exactly that in their everyday work. We call it "A Day in the Life." These are all people making a difference in today's libraries. How are

they doing it? First, they have developed a sense of pride and ownership that inspirational speaker Judy Pearson describes. Second, they are willing to step up to the challenges that WLA President Martha Parsons presents by becoming involved and learning the values and rewards of contributing to the library profession. Third, they know the importance of humor and creativity, as Pam North demonstrates in her article about keeping it light.

Embracing change requires a willingness to grow and go above and beyond the normal duties assigned to a job. From Robin Beerbower's description of a day in the life of a conference planner, to the power of collaborative communication and eagerness for positive change that Sherry Buchanan describes, each author shares a picture of how they handle and embrace change.

From the typical hectic day that Oregon State University's Lisa Conaster describes, to Susan Gilmont from the Hatfield Marine Science Center, each provides us with a brief glimpse of the incredible number of hats one can wear during the day. Portland State's Carolee Harrison discovers by taking her book repair workshop around the state that she has learned an incredible amount about the scope of library work outside of her home library. Mother, wife, and rancher Deniece Davis, a Library Technician III at the Oregon Institute of Technology, compares and contrasts the rhythm of the seasons in her many roles.

It's not just the paid employees that are embracing change in Oregon libraries. Volunteers make a huge contribution to Oregon libraries as Jim Willhite, a volunteer for the Willamette Valley Genealogical Society and the State Library, proves in his article.

As we compiled these stories, there was never any problem getting people to share what they have been doing. All of the authors have an excitement and belief in their jobs and what they can accomplish. It's time to start celebrating the work that is being done. There should never be an OLA annual award that does not receive any nominations. The next time you notice something special happening in your library, give your director or co-worker a high five, or even nominate them for an award. Until then, enjoy the incredible passion described in *A Day in the Life*.

A note on terminology: The OLA Executive Board adopted an SSD-sponsored resolution on inclusive language several years ago. In most articles in this issue, "library staff" is used instead of "librarian," even if "librarian" was not used in an exclusionary way. However, in a few instances, we've left "librarian" in, even though it refers to library staff at all levels.

Jey Wann and Bill Kelm,  
*Guest Editors*

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