OLAQ

Volume 6 , Number 1
Special Double Issue: Grants (Summer 2000) | Pages

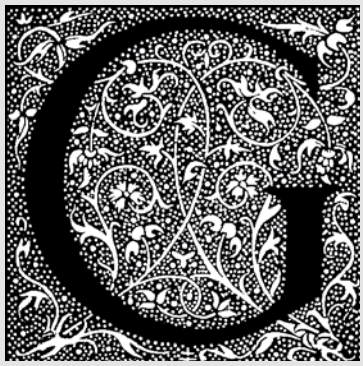
July 2014

Volume 6, Issue 1/2

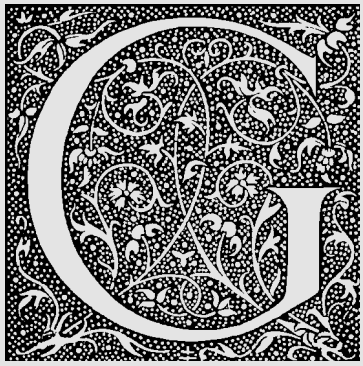
(2014). Volume 6, Issue 1/2. *OLA Quarterly, 6*(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.7710/1093-7374.1689

© 2014 by the author(s).
OLA Quarterly is an official publication of the Oregon Library Association | ISSN 1093-7374

OLA Quarterly



GRANTS
why you need 'em



GRANTS
where to get 'em

GRANTS
how to write 'em

In this Issue

First You Have to Have an Earthquake… the Molalla Public Library Project

Grants for Big Projects in Small Libraries

National Connections: Connecting Locally, Nationally, and Even Internationally

Secrets of Successful Grant Writing: Using the Phased Approach in a Small Public Library

Thinking Locally First

... and more

Summer 2000
Vol 6 • No 1/2
Oregon Library Association

Oregon Library Association
1999-2000 Executive Board

President • Terry Ann Rohe
Portland State University
503-725-4542, rohet@pdx.edu

Vice President • Anne Van Sickle
McMinnville Public Library
503-435-5550, vansica@ci.mcminnville.or.us

Past President • Sara Charlton
Tillamook County Library
503-842-4792, scharlton@wcn.net

Secretary • Carol Reich
Hillsboro Public Library
503-615-6514, carolr@ci.hillsboro.or.us

Treasurer • Andrew Bonamici
University of Oregon
541-346-2682, bonamici@oregon.uoregon.edu

ALA Representative • Deborah Carver
University of Oregon
541-346-1892, dcarver@oregon.uoregon.edu

PNLA Representative • Nancy Spaulding
Cedar Mill Community Library
503-645-1257, spauldin@teleport.com

State Librarian • Jim Scheppke
Oregon State Library, 503-378-4367
jim.b.scheppke@state.or.us

Academic Library Division • Anne Christie
Oregon State University
541-737-7291, anne.christie@orst.edu

Children's Services Division • Jill Heffner
Driftwood Public Library, 541-996-2277
jillh1018@yahoo.com

Oregon Young Adult Network • Ruth Allen
Multnomah County Library
503-248-5236
rutha@nethost.multnomah.lib.or.us

Public Library Division • Connie Bennett
Silver Falls Library District, 503-873-6513
connieb@ccrls.org

Staff Support Division • Jan Griffin
Eugene Public Library, 541-682-5695
jan.e.griffin@ci.eugene.or.us

Trustees and Friends Division • Barbara Wright
Hillsboro Public Library, 503-644-7307
barbw@img-oregon.com

Member at Large • Diedre Conkling
Lincoln County Library District, 541-265-3066
dconklin@oregonvos.net

The Publications Committee

Colleen Bell, chair
University of Oregon

Juanita Benedicto
University of Oregon

Anne Billeter
Jackson County Library System

Aletha Bonebrake
Baker County Public Library

Kris Kern
Portland State University

Carolyn Peake
Lake Oswego Public Library

Fred Reentsjerna
Douglas County Library

Kathryn Constant, ex officio
Portland Community College
Editor, *OLA Web Site*

Mary Ellen Kenreich, ex officio
Portland State University
Ad Coordinator

Pam North, ex officio
Sherwood Public Library
Editor, *OLA Hotline*

Upcoming Issues

Fall 2000
To Be Announced

Winter 2000
To Be Announced

OLA Quarterly* is indexed in *Library Literature.

OLA Quarterly

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Writing Grants…

Grants and why ya gotta write 'em… that's what I started out with as an underlying theme for this issue of *OLA Quarterly*. After some consideration of scope, not to mention grammar, I decided that I would try to gather a selection of articles from smaller libraries that would teach us all about the vagaries of the grant writing process, as well as encourage those in smaller libraries who have not yet ventured into the land of award deadlines and need statements. I think we have succeeded far beyond my initial hopes. In this issue you will find not only "how I did it well" articles, but articles that share with all of us what the authors learned as they went through the steps of writing a grant application. You will find articles related to building projects, programming grants, and collection development, as well as helpful hints and tales of trial and error. Not all of the authors are library directors, which proves my point that a grant application can originate from anywhere in a library structure so long as it creates opportunity for library users and the people who serve them.

I have enjoyed my guest editorial experience, and take full blame if this issue doesn't land in your mailboxes quite on time. I thank those who took the time to write the articles and send them in on time and those who didn't make the first deadline—we all did very well!

Sue Jenkins, *Guest Editor*
Driftwood Public Library

2
First You Have to Have an Earthquake… the Molalla Public Library Project
by Randy Collver

4
Grants for Big Projects in Small Libraries
by Aletha Bonebrake

6
National Connections: Connecting Locally, Nationally, and Even Internationally
by Dee Goldman

8
Secrets of Successful Grant Writing: Using the Phased Approach in a Small Public Library
by Connie J. Bennett

12
Thinking Locally First
by Sue Jenkins

14
"Who, Me?" I thought, when my director asked me to write an article for *the OLA Quarterly*
by Jill Heffner

The *OLA Quarterly* is an official publication of the Oregon Library Association. Please refer questions and input regarding the *Quarterly* to:

Colleen Bell
OLA Publications Chair
Knight Library
1299 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-1299
phone 541-346-1817
fax 541-346-3485
cbell@darkwing.uoregon.edu

Graphic Production:
Sanda Communications
800 NW Starker Avenue, Ste.15
Corvallis, OR 97330
phone 541-752-7080
fax 541-758-7319
olaq@sandacom.com

www.olaweb.org

Summer 2000
Vol 6 • No 1/2
Oregon Library Association
ISSN 1093-7374

First You Have to Have an Earthquake… the Molalla Public Library Project

by Randy Collver
City Librarian
Molalla, Oregon

In March of 1993 the "Spring Break Quake" struck the upper Willamette Valley. In the City of Molalla the most significant impact was on the high school's main building, which was so badly damaged that it was condemned and eventually demolished. Behind that main building there is an addition built in the 1970's, the bulk of which houses the school district's administrative offices. Also in that addition, and unused since the earthquake, was the old high school's former library—approximately 10,000 square feet of prime library space.

In August of 1996 the City hired me as the new City Librarian. Shortly thereafter, then City Administrator Harvey Barnes took me over to that empty high school library. The old school building was being demolished, and the library itself was cluttered with the remnants of the quake—broken furniture, puddles of water from a badly leaking roof, exposed ceiling fixtures and other odds and ends.

"Randy," Harvey asked me, "what do you think of this as the future home of the Molalla Public Library?" With a facility housed in a very crowded 2,000 square foot space, and no other prospects for expansion, I could only smile.

Shortly after that, the city entered into negotiations with the Molalla River School District to lease the high school's empty library space as the new location of the Molalla Public Library. The School District agreed to lease the library space, and added to the lease the grounds on which the original high school building had stood, to be used for the development of a city park. This agreement formed the foundation of the new library project. Without the School District's cooperation and support, there would have been no library project at all.

"Randy," Harvey asked me, "what do you think of this as the future home of the Molalla Public Library?" With a facility housed in a very crowded 2,000 square foot space, and no other prospects for expansion, I could only smile.

By 1996 the city had set aside $180,000 in capital funds for a new library. At that time it was estimated that an additional $100,000 would be necessary to renovate the former high school library and complete the move. The city submitted an LSCA grant to the State Library, and was successful in securing $100,000 in funding. With that funding the city contracted with the architectural firm Dull, Olsen, and Weeks to prepare plans for the renovation.

As a result of the initial proposal from the architects, it became apparent that the renovation would cost considerably more than was initially anticipated. As mentioned earlier, the roof was letting more water in than it was keeping out. The rooftop heating unit was not a stand-alone system as had been thought, but rather a slave to the main boiler that had been in the demolished high school building. It was also determined that while the building had heating, it had not been air-conditioned. Power to the building was also found to be inadequate to support the number of computer terminals required. And so on, and so on. Clearly, more funding was needed.

By this time the city had a new administrator, Gene Green. Congresswoman Darlene Hooley had contacted Mr. Green and the city's mayor, Mike Clarke, and asked whether the city had any projects that she might be able to assist with. After discussing a number of options, it was decided that the library project was the most appropriate. Congresswoman Hooley and her staff began work on obtaining $400,000 in funding for the renovation.

It is very different working with a Foundation or other granting agency than it is working directly with your congressional representative. Foundations and granting agencies have published deadlines, application forms and criteria; Congresswoman Hooley was working through the federal budget process. This process is lengthy and, to the layperson, a difficult maze to navigate. It requires a great amount of time on the part of the Congresswoman and her staff as they track each piece of legislation they sponsor through every step of the process.

Working with Congresswoman Hooley and her staff, one begins to get a glimpse of how hard they work and how busy they are. Successful legislation requires an incredible amount of time and organization. We were fortunate indeed to have in Darlene Hooley a represen-

tative with a genuine interest in public libraries. We did not have to sell her on the project or persuade her of the value of a library to a small rural community. She has a long history of supporting libraries and is particularly knowledgeable and well spoken on the relevant issues. She was willing to dedicate her time and her staff's time to seeing this project through. Not every elected official has this background, even though they may have the desire. With all the demands on her time, her work on this project was extraordinary.

In short, working with your congressperson is not an impersonal process. It requires two-way communication; it also requires patience. Progress comes in fits and starts, with long periods of seeming inaction followed by a flurry of activity. Because we were understandably very anxious to secure the funds, we made frequent calls just to "check in." My recommendation is that you begin developing a relationship with your congressional representative now before you need that contact. Send an occasional letter describing any projects or programs you see coming down the road. Keep in touch with his or her local staff. Find out what interests them, what their specialty is. If they offer to help with a project, enlist that help. Congresswoman Hooley's success in getting funding for our project was unusual, but her willingness to help was not.

Once the money was successfully appropriated, the next step was disbursing funds to the city. In our case, the funds were assigned to the Institute of Museum and Library Services as part of the Library Services and Technology Act Leadership program. We received a letter from Joyce Ray, Director of the Office of Library Services, indicating that we had been awarded a non-competitive grant under the guidelines of that program. We were instructed to fill out a grant application and send it in. I called the Institute with questions and had those questions answered quickly and professionally. All of the Office of Library Services staff have been both knowledgeable and helpful.

Because the bulk of our financial need for the library project was for construction and renovation, and the IMLS no longer funds this type of project, a series of discussions between our staff and the staffs of the Institute and Congresswoman Hooley's office became necessary. These discussions resulted in a clear understanding of what funds may be used for what purposes. On April 6th, 2000 the city held a meeting for potential project bidders, with bids due on the 20th of April. By the time you read this the bid should have been awarded, and the project should be underway. We hope to be in our new home by mid-October of 2000.

Fund-raising, as you all know, is an art unto itself. Having spent the majority of my career as an academic librarian, and most of those years at private colleges, I was used to either getting a call from our Development Office with a request for information to be used in a proposal, or in writing a rough draft of a proposal, sending it to the Development Office, and either getting a quick rejection or having the money mysteriously show up some time later. The audience for whom I wrote the draft was an internal department completely familiar with the institution, its goals, objectives and overall needs. This changes completely when you yourself are the entire development department—and this is but a small part of the rest of your job. It requires a heavy time commitment and an environment that allows you to take the time needed.

There is no magic solution when seeking outside funds. Was working with Congresswoman Hooley and the Institute for Museum and Library Services easier than working with a private foundation or other government body? Was it easier, and did it have a greater potential for success than seeking voter approval of a bond issue? The answer is: it wasn't better and it wasn't worse, it was just different. Each project, and each library, has different strengths and weaknesses, a different community and a different web of connections to other communities, people and organizations. To raise funds successfully, you must know your potential funding sources, maximize your strengths, and expand your connections.

To raise funds successfully, you must know your potential funding sources, maximize your strengths, and expand your connections.

During the time we were working with Congresswoman Hooley, we were also adding new services to the existing library, expanding library hours, developing new children's programs, and paying close attention to adding new books and periodicals that met targeted community needs. We also received a number of smaller grants and in-kind contributions focused on advancing existing services and programs. As a result, we were able to continually generate positive reports on circulation growth and overall use of the existing library. As the old adage goes, "nothing succeeds like success." We were also very active in working with community groups and organizations to establish partnerships to help meet overall community needs. We made it a priority to develop broad-based, comprehensive community support.

Ultimately, success can be achieved in your community by teaming with a funding source that believes in your project, either because of their mission and history, or because of your success in educating them and developing a strong relationship. I hope this information has been useful. If I can be of help to anyone working on a project for his or her library, please feel free to contact me by mail at the Molalla Public Library, P.O. Box 208, Molalla, OR 97038, by telephone at 503.829.2593, or by email at moplcom@molalla.net.

Grants for Big Projects in Small Libraries

by Aletha Bonebrake
Baker County Public Library

Diminishing the project is no longer an option since the public bought the dream. You certainly can't give them their money back.

There you are, blueprints in hand, brimming with gratitude that the voters have passed a million dollar bond measure to enlarge and remodel your 30-year-old library building. You have fostered expectations in the process of selling the bond measure for more people space, new furniture, enough computers to meet the needs of every age group and a certain aesthetic beauty beyond the rectangular box you started with. These expectations become your own.

The size of the bond, of course, was based on your architect's estimate of the project's cost plus all the costs of bond issuance. There is plenty to go around. Then the project goes out to bid and a $900,000 project comes in at one and a quarter million dollars, low bid, no furnishings. Once you get over the shock and, to tell the truth, the anger, you begin to look for funding sources. Diminishing the project is no longer an option since the public bought the dream. You certainly can't give them their money back.

It Happened to Us

We immediately turned to seeking grants. And, for the most part, this solution did the job. In the end, over a 6 month period we were granted a total of $130,000 from four separate foundations. There was the probability of $70,000 more, but unique circumstances prevented an award. It is interesting to know about the failures, though I'm not sure they can be avoided. In the instance of our second largest request of $56,000 for computer upgrades and expansion, the grant would have been awarded, we were told, had we been the library up the road. Our community had just received $1 million from the same Foundation not three months earlier, and the Foundation thought that was enough for now. In the other instance of failure, we had submitted two grants to the same local Foundation in the same grant cycle, albeit for wholly different purposes; their rules said we were allowed only one. They asked me to choose, and we chose books over a security system.

What we learned from the first failure was, whenever possible, to partner with other community groups that are pursuing the same funding sources. We tried to enter the Partnership when the shortfall became known, but they were too far into their process and we had a political agenda to pass the bond that they wished to avoid. They did write a letter of support about how our project enhanced their goals and why we weren't a member, which answered the first question a funder might ask about why this renegade was not part of the Partnership. Beware, however, of strings that might be attached to partnerships. I have since discovered that the Partnership set the agenda for prioritizing needs and certain of the partners' needs have not yet been addressed in grant applications in the three years of its existence. I saw some tempers running high and was glad our hands weren't tied.

The second failure holds a similar lesson. Bind two needs into one grant, as logically as is possible, to help the trustees give you all the money they want to without breaching their own rules. When I sat before our local trustees they were truly torn about not giving us money for both needs. I am sure, as I look back, that had I said we need book support for this third recovery year from Measure 47/50 and a security system to protect these and all our materials, they would have granted it. But then, that is our local foundation and they have supported us in several projects over the years.

When I bundled requests for building components together with furnishings needs in other grant applications, in two out of three we were given less than requested and permitted to choose which among our needs to fund. We chose the building components each time, since we could add the unfunded furnishings to another grant request and try again, or do without. Not so with the building.

Interestingly, the Partnership connection failure and the ability to bundle requests to our local foundation resulted in our second largest grant for the building. One of the Partnership members was the Leo Adler Memorial Pathway committee, which is developing a bicycle path from the Sports Complex (grant-funded) to the park and beyond, which happens to pass by the library. On our behalf, because we were excluded, this committee added $50,000 to their application to our local fund to pay for the fancy walkway and exterior lighting outside our new meeting room that faces their proposed pathway across the river.

We had two categories of funding needs to address: a shortfall on the building, and another on the furnishings. We went aggressively after the building needs first,

because timeliness is paramount. Grant funds may not be used to reimburse money already spent or pay for work already completed. We parceled the service areas of the building looking for grant-eligible components and came up with several: the divider curtain for the meeting room ($6,500) to get more public use of the space; drive up window for winter and handicapped service ($10,000); built-in seating for children's storytime ($3,500); four tutoring rooms to support literacy programs ($18,200); an electronic security system ($20,700); and retrofit and installation of Spacesaver shelving (which was a gift of used equipment valued at $54,000, used as matching funds) for periodical and branch room storage ($12,700). We worked with the builder to avoid completion of these components until the grant money came in; in some cases it was touch and go.

The Library Board authorized $3,500 for a grantwriter to help with the process. I highly recommend doing this for smaller institutions without in-house expertise or the time to do it right. A grantwriter knows the ropes for finding a good funding match to your needs and will write your application as the funders wish to see it, but they will rely heavily on you for the decisions, the background information, corporate information, statistical data, budget documents, anecdotal evidence and the passion of the cause.

Mid-project, I went to a two-day workshop with my grant writer in the U.S. Bank room at Multnomah County Central Library. The workshop, sponsored by TACS (*Technical Assistance for Community Services*) was entitled *Foundation and Corporate Grant Strategies* and was given by Rick Levine. This was an indispensable exposure to philanthropic philosophy, and a practical blueprint for establishing a fundable grant. Believe it or not, foundations want to give you money. It is the reason for their being. Do not go hat in hand, but project in hand, passion in hand, and they will welcome you. This belief makes your job much easier. They want to help you protect, expand and fully utilize what you have and to expand your successes for the greater good.

During the course of raising funds for our Library remodel project, I discovered two powerful levers for success. First was that matching funds (in our case, $1 million from the voters) show the public buy-in that funders want to see. Second was to involve many funding partners in achieving the total project; that is to say, spread the grant requests around. I was asked many times by program officers who else had been approached for project funding, and whether they had yet committed funding, and if so, how much. They especially wanted to see major buy-in from our local foundation. When we were turned down by the one major Oregon foundation for reasons not bearing on the merit of our request, that foundation's staff helped us out by sharing the reason with another foundation's program officer so as not to begin a domino-effect of failure. This second foundation gave us our largest grant of $60,000 to buy all the new furnishings needed for the public areas.

…develop a relationship with your potential funding sources before you submit a grant request.

This brings to mind the last, and possibly the most important, piece of advice I learned and pass on for success, and one that was reinforced time and again at the TACS workshop. That is, develop a relationship with your potential funding sources before you submit a grant request. Find out if what you have in mind meets their goals, and how to develop a narrative that will address these goals. Some funders like infrastructure development, some like service programs. Most encourage you to call and discuss your project with them first. It makes the job easier for both of you, and greatly improves your chances of success.

What would I do differently? Follow my own advice: plan the grant requests at the same time as the building project is being designed, knowing what is reasonable and what matching funds are in hand so as not to be caught short by an inadequate contingency when the project is too far along; definitely make a preliminary approach to the major regional funders to tailor the request to their interests and establish the personal relationship that will guide the request through the process. We learned this too late in the process. Our very first request for funding was sent out cold and we received one-third of the request. We never knew what part appealed to them and why we didn't make a successful case for the rest. Now I know to call and ask what we could have done differently, and to establish that relationship. Funders will tell you they are likely to fund requests from entities with whom they have worked in the past, so it is never inappropriate to seek guidance, even if you have not been successful with them.

Training, planning for timeliness, hiring a supportive grantwriter, partnering with local civic projects and agencies you serve, having matching funds, in-kind gifts and a good cause will lead you to success. Q

National Connections:
Connecting Locally, Nationally, and Even Internationally

by Dee Goldman
McMinnville Public Library

McMinnville Public Library is a city library, located in McMinnville, the county seat of Yamhill County. The library is part of the Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service (CCRLS) and has a population service district of 38,000. Located in the Mid-Willamette Valley, Yamhill County has a varied economic base including manufacturing, forestry and agriculture. Vineyards and nursery stock are the most rapidly increasing crop types, joining more traditional farm products such as berries, cherries, hazelnuts, grass seed, grain, and livestock. With more year-round agricultural jobs replacing seasonal employment, there has been a rapid change in the demographics of the area. Since 1990 the Hispanic population has risen 74 percent, from 6.3 percent to 9.1 percent in 1997. Hispanics now make up 12 percent of McMinnville's population.

McMinnville has a long history of providing adult programming, both on its own and partnering with other organizations. It started with the *Let's Talk About It* series through the Oregon State Library years ago, and has used many of the Oregon Council for the Humanities (OCH) Chautauqua programs. McMinnville has received grants from the American Library Association (ALA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to present *Poets in Person* and *Exploring the West… Whose West?*

This past year a citizen planning committee developed a strategic plan for the library. One of the three important Service Responses identified in the plan is Cultural Awareness. An essential component is to reach the under-served Hispanic population of the area. By making the library a welcoming and comfortable place to be, Hispanics can see what the library has to offer and communicate to staff what would be most beneficial to them.

One of our partners in programs and projects is the local campus of Chemeketa Community College (CCC). It offers English as a Second Language classes and houses the local literacy program, formerly housed in the library. In discussions with CCC, we realized that many students complete all of the ESL classes available, but have not had enough experience using English, articulating thoughts, and discussing ideas with others, to continue on to adult basic education classes.

National Connections is a reading and discussion program for adult new readers based on children's literature. It gives participants an opportunity to gather with their peers to discuss timeless themes and to make connections, sometimes for the first time, between books and their own lives. It is modeled on a Vermont program that has enrolled more than 10,000 participants since 1986. The Vermont Council for the Humanities, in partnership with ALA and funded by a grant from the NEH, selected 40 libraries nationwide to participate in the expansion of the program. The Vermont Council and NEH wanted more state humanities councils to try programs that promote the humanities to literacy students.

To apply, McMinnville formed a team including Charma Vaage and Pam Stewart from Chemeketa Community College as literacy members. Both women are enthusiastic library users and supporters. Representing the humanities council was Penny Hummel, then OCH Associate Director. Penny is also active in local, state, and national library issues. Paul Gregorio, the member who served as discussion leader/scholar, teaches juvenile literature in Portland State University's graduate program. Paul is also a librarian and former Education/Outreach person for the Oregon State Library. I served as the representative for the McMinnville Public Library, and coordinated the team. In the past I had worked in children's services, and am currently a member of the local Chemeketa Community College advisory board.

McMinnville was honored to be chosen as the only West Coast library to host a program. The grant provided sets of books for participants to keep, money for a scholar, and a three-day training session in Chicago for four members of the team. Before going, the team discovered significant differences between literacy programs in McMinnville and those in Vermont. Vermont's literacy students are for the most part not ESL students, and their model of literacy training is one on one. In McMinnville ESL students have classroom training, and therefore we had no base of volunteers with whom they were already working. The grant had barely mentioned tutors, assuming our literacy model to be like Vermont's. It was a grant with a very short time line between acceptance and implementation, so the Chicago training session became all the more critical.

In the end, our program was designed to have two series: one in the spring of 1999 and another in the fall of 1999. We tried to select the most universal themes for our anticipated audience, picking *Biographies* for spring and *Friendship* for fall. Each series would have three sessions, one per month, each for two hours. We recruited through the community college, which represented a reliable source of students because their reading levels were known.

At the first session, our discussion leader set people at ease by talking about how one of Lincoln's biographers based part of his account on the contents of Lincoln's

pockets when he died. Paul Gregorio had group members talk about something that they carry with them that might help a biographer understand them. People laughed, felt more comfortable, and realized that they too had stories to tell.

Although the books chosen by Vermont featured people of many ethnic backgrounds, there were no books about Hispanics. We added some poems by Gary Soto, a prominent young Latino writer. His poems reinforce that you don't have to accomplish something great to have your story be of interest to others. Many participants liked the biography theme best because those they learned about had typically struggled to overcome obstacles. In evaluations several people mentioned how these books helped them personally, and made them feel less depressed.

During the spring session we did a lot of adjusting as we learned what worked and what didn't, and we changed several things for the fall series. Working with ESL students meant that our participants were not only reading in another language, and maybe in any language for the first time, but that they were also being called upon to participate in discussions in an unfamiliar language. There were also many concepts or historical personages that were not part of their experience: for example, the Underground Railroad and Eleanor Roosevelt.

We learned that some of the Program's books were at too high a reading level and led to a feeling of failure, rather than one of success and self-esteem. (The Lincoln biography caused an alarming dropout rate.) We learned what a great opportunity the daycare we provided offered. In the fall we enhanced that experience. In addition to having a baby-sitter, a member of the children's staff would do an activity with the kids. It was a wonderful opportunity to let children and their families get comfortable with the library, and to let them know what children's programming and materials we offer, both in English and in Spanish.

Participants arrived late and never wanted to leave at closing, so we started earlier, lengthened the time of the session, skipped breaks and ate as we went. Discussions still continued outside the library at closing! One of our most eager participants, a man in his late 20s studying to be an EMT, had his student visa run out during the session and he was deported to Guatemala. Immigration and Naturalization Services allowed him to stay through the summer to finish up some course work. The student asked when we were starting the fall session, because he wanted to participate so badly. It was too late for him, but he said that if we would give him books, he would write us letters to share his thoughts. Who could resist? We bought an extra set of books for him and indeed, he wrote to us. International connections!

In the fall we also recruited participants through plant nurseries and by word of mouth. This meant some would-be participants were at too low a reading or conversational level, but we introduced them to the library and referred them to the literacy program. For the *National Connections* fall series we had more tutors in place, allowing us to assign only one or two students to each tutor. This made for some lasting connections, both for tutoring and for friendship.

Because of attrition in the spring session, we invited more than fifteen participants, and only distributed one session's worth of books at a time. Some people who were part of the same household were willing to share sets of books. The fall series had adult new readers from Mexico, Guatemala, Spain, Italy, Poland and Korea, making discussions particularly rich and interesting. When the group seemed too large we spent part of the session in smaller discussion groups. Our team had decided to withhold the book, *Bridge to Terabithia,* because of its advanced reading level. We planned to give it to students at the final session, to read over time. Participants were shocked and indignant that we would give them a book without the opportunity to discuss it together! Team members, tutors and adult new readers all agreed to put in the extra time and come back in a month and a half for an extra session. We used oral rather than written evaluations for the fall series, with much greater success.

Through *National Connections* the local literacy program has gained visibility, added new clients, new tutors, and a further familiarity with the library's resources. The Oregon Council for the Humanities is currently evaluating various literacy programs. Portland State University, through Paul Gregorio's position on the faculty of the Literacy Education Program in the Graduate School of Education, has gained experience and insights into training educators to work with diverse populations in Oregon. Both Gregorio and McMinnville Public Library would like to see a *National Connections*-type program with some changes to better serve our state's needs.

The McMinnville Public Library has gained enthusiastic new patrons and supporters! Our new readers now use the library for children's programs, recreational and how-to reading, and job searching. One woman was so excited that she brings friends to see what they have been missing. The library has a better understanding of the under-served Hispanic population in the county and has built some important bridges with this community. We have been asked by other agencies to be a part of their planning for the future with regard to the changing demographics of our area. I learned much that will help with future programming and with materials selection for the Spanish language collection, and I learned just how much I don't know! The team's poster presentation has been accepted for ALA's poster session on diversity, and Anne Van Sickle, director of McMinnville Public Library and OLA president-elect, along with Paul Gregorio, will be presenting it at ALA this summer in Chicago.

See National Connections *page 16*

Secrets of Successful Grant Writing:

Using the Phased Approach in a Small Public Library

by Connie J. Bennett, Director
Silver Falls Library District

Silver Falls Library District director, Connie J. Bennett perusing Spanish language materials at Ediciones Castillo's booth at the Feria Internacional de Libro (FIL) in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. The purchasing trip to FIL (also known as the Guadalajara Book Fair) was paid for with grant funds.

Introduction
Granting agencies frequently speak of the grant cycle, and from their point of view it makes sense to divide the year into periods of time when they accept new applications, actively review applications received, or announce grant awards. There is a different rhythm and new slant on the process when the process is seen from the applicant's point of view. This alternative grant cycle goes through a similar series of phases which must intermesh with the granting agency's cycle to achieve success.

When I was invited to share my successful grant writing secrets with other small public libraries, my first thought was to do just precisely that—to pass on to others all my tips and the wisdom I've gleaned through successful and unsuccessful past attempts, using examples from the Silver Falls Library District's current award of a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant to improve Spanish language collection and services, *La Biblioteca de Silver Falls: un programa para la comunidad hispanohablante.* However, as I began thinking about the grant application process, it seemed to me that the actual writing of the grant application was just one phase of the entire process, and that it would be useful to examine the process more holistically. Each phase has its rhythm and its pitfalls; the skills needed and the advice I would proffer depends on a particular library's current perspective.

The Phases
Yes, I am a dreamer. For a dreamer is one who can find his way by moonlight, and see the dawn before the rest of the world. —Oscar Wilde

I have divided the grant process into four phases. The first phase includes the activities that occur prior to the actual writing of a grant. The second phase begins with the project design and the grant writing process and ends with the successful receipt of the grant; the third phase is management and implementation of the grant. The fourth and final phase consists of those activities which immediately follow the termination of a grant.

Perhaps it should be noted that these phases are linked to the activity of any one particular grant, so if your library is juggling multiple grants, the dynamics become quite complex. For example, the Silver Falls Library is currently in phase three of the year 2000 LSTA grant (*La Biblioteca*) featured in this article. We are also in phase three of our third *Schools and Libraries Universal Services* grant for underwriting telephone services, in phase four of a State of Oregon *Ready-to-Read* grant that purchased classic children's books, in phase two of an Oregon Library Association Children's Division summer reading program grant, in phase one of a local program grant to Silverton Together, and in phase two of a new LSTA grant for 2001.

The First Phase: Laying the groundwork
Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars. —Les Brown

The first grant phase includes the activities that must occur prior to the actual writing of a grant. The hallmark of the first phase of grant writing, like the dark phase of the moon, is that while a great deal needs to take place, no grant activities are overtly visible.

The initial steps in grant writing are the identical steps that a library takes to prepare itself for a planned future, whether or not grant funds are involved. This involves "getting your house in order" by making sure your library has a current mission statement, appropriate policies in place, written job descriptions, a current long range plan, active community involvement, and a staff training plan, as well as the basic appropriate and functional daily operations. A self-assessment tool such as the recently developed *Oregon Library Association Standards for Public Libraries—2000*[1] can serve as a checklist for evaluating the current status of your library. The ideal grant will lift you from one sustainable level of library operations to a higher sustainable level; my image is a staircase, with the grant funding serving as the vertical link between two treads.

The purpose of starting a grant writing process with this phase is twofold. The activities of the first phase are critical for clearly differentiating between the library's basic operations (for which grant support is usually not available) and the library's special needs which might be prime targets for grant funding. The other objective in this phase is to deliberately establish the library as a successful, well governed organization with which a granting agency would want to associate.

Creating a statement of need implies that the library has chosen its service goals and pinpointed where local resources are insufficient to achieve them. Once various potential needs have been identified, the next step is to research grant funds available and the goals of the granting organization. You are looking for a match that will enable a granting agency to achieve its own goals by fulfilling the library's identified needs, and this may require some slight tweaking of your original statement of need.

As an example of this process, Silver Falls Library's *La Biblioteca* grant started with a basic identification of need: "We need more materials in Spanish to serve community demand." The grant was funded with Institute of Museum and Library Services funding through the Library Grants to States. One of Oregon's stated goals for this program is LSTA Goal 2, Priority 3, Objective 3.3: "By 2002, plan, develop, and promote programs of library service for those with limited English-speaking proficiency and assist in the development of collections suitable to meet the needs of the limited English-speaking, both for native language materials and English language instructional materials or other instructional materials." There is a high degree of correlation between the library's need and the LSTA program goal, but the differences required the first modification of the need statement, which led us to change it to: "We need materials and services in Spanish to serve community demand."

Silver Falls Library District's new Youth Services Librarian, Janay Mulligan (left) and Juana M. Vega (right) who was hired with LSTA grant funds as the library's Hispanic Outreach Assistant.

Another common grant requirement is that the proposal show innovation. This can be seen as a stumbling block in small public libraries with the same pressing needs as many of their peers. In the case of the *La Biblioteca* grant, a number of other libraries in the state had already received LSTA funding for Spanish materials and services. The challenge became how to make our version of a similar request sufficiently innovative and unique. I have found two techniques particularly useful in developing this aspect of a grant project. One is the idea of building on insufficient past efforts—in our case some tentative and marginally successful excursions into bilingual story hour programming for children. The other is using unique strengths in your community to put a local twist on the proposal. In the *La Biblioteca* proposal we were able to identify a lack of transportation as one key reason that our original bilingual story hour programs were so poorly attended, and to link this hurdle with a LSTA grant component that built on local alliances to provide community transportation. By now our need statement had become: "We need to provide access to new materials and services in Spanish to serve community demand."

This gradual modification of the need statement is a very appropriate part of the first phase of a grant project. Caveats include the danger of allowing the need statement to be so thoroughly modified that the result no longer meets the library's original need and alternatively, allowing the needs revision process to drag on into later phases of the grant process.

To sum up the first phase, the library should identify needs that might be suitable for a grant, locate potential grant programs, revise the need statement to align the library's and the granting agency's goals, and establish the library as a competent recipient. And all this occurs before putting pen to paper—or, more realistically, fingers to keyboard.

The Second Phase: The Grant Application

A new moon teaches gradualness and deliberation and how one gives birth to oneself slowly. —Jelaluddin Rumi

The second phase begins with the project design, proceeds through the grant writing process, and ends with the successful receipt of the grant. During this phase, the public perception of grant activities gradually waxes to a crescendo at the point of the successful grant award announcement.

You should begin the project design portion of the second phase having already established the library's need in alignment with the funding agency's goals. You should also have already spent some time establishing the library's credibility as a reliable partner. The next step is to design a project so that its success will make both the library and the granting agency look good. The project must be realistic considering your library's resources; both the library and the grant review panel have to believe that its goals are achievable. It also must

be ambitious enough to be worth the time invested in securing and implementing the grant. You will also need to plan how grant funds will boost the library to a new level without producing an unsupportable future need.

It is critical that the library director be involved in the project design, but it is also a good idea to use the ideas and expertise available on your staff and in your community during this step. Another valuable source of assistance is the granting agency staff. For example, when writing an LSTA grant I have asked the Oregon State Library staff to respond to grant concepts and for copies of similar, previously funded grants. Because the LSTA grant application is a two-part process, the library can get valuable information from the readers' comments, and should be sure to review the project design to address any concerns raised in response to the initial proposal. The quality of the project design can make a significant difference when you move into the grant implementation in phase three, and a good project design can make the grant writing process easier as well.

During this second phase it is important to keep returning to the original library need statement that you developed in phase one. The statement should directly generate the project objectives. It should also serve as a touchstone to maintain a balance between conflicting pressures throughout the project design and the writing of the grant application. Project elements need to be probed with a reality check as you visualize how grant elements will actually occur within the context of continuing library operations. It is during the project design that you should be sure that your governing body will support the grant project. Some other caveats for project design include being careful not to underestimate library staff time to implement the grant, being sure to include volunteer time (and benefits) as a match, and to call on the community alliances that you have cultivated for letters of support.

The typical small library director may be wondering at this point how this level of planning can be accomplished while still effectively handling the quotidian responsibilities of providing regular library service to the public. One answer is that up to this point, the timing of the phases is under your own control. For example in the *La Biblioteca* grant, it took more than two years from the initial decision to apply for such a grant before I began to design the project and write the application. And sometimes the library's situation changes enough that abandoning the grant project becomes the better choice. During the grant application process for *La Biblioteca,* another library chose to do just that, and we were able to pick up elements of the abandoned grant to enhance our proposal.[2]

Once you have found the functional balance of a project design that you think can work, the grant writing process becomes much more mechanical. In a small public library, the actual writing most often falls to the library director, but do not overlook the possibility of using other staff, a contractor, or even a volunteer to assist you, especially if writing is not your forte. It is easy to overinvest in grant writing. Writing time needs to be balanced with other responsibilities, as well as planned into your calendar to avoid conflicts with other time intensive activities such as budget preparation. Another option is to look at a cooperative grant in which a partner might be able to prepare the grant application. However, you should be aware that partnerships take a lot of time, energy, and patience; you may realize your trade-off is less writing for more meetings.

The annual Feria International del Libro (FIL) in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, which is the third largest book fair in the world.

My tips for this part of the process are the classic ones: read the instructions carefully, follow the instructions precisely, and meet deadlines punctually. If it seems routine, remember that this is part of how you show you can follow through on the grant.

The first opportunity for public celebration comes at that euphoric moment when you find out for sure that your library has received the award. Not only should you provide a press release, but also informational thank-you notes to all those who wrote letters of support. This should get the grant off to a good start in your community.

To sum up the second phase, the library needs to design a grant project to be a success experience, to balance the work load of the writing and planned implementation of the grant with the library's ongoing staff needs, and to prove by precise attention to detail during the application process that the library is capable of handling the grant project. The library also needs to publicly celebrate when the second phase culminates in the grant award.

The Third Phase: Implementation of the Grant Project

The youth gets together his materials to build a bridge to the moon, or, perchance, a palace or temple on the earth, and, at length, the middle-aged man concludes to build a woodshed with them. —Henry David Thoreau

The third phase is management and implementation of the grant. This phase is by far the most visible to the library's public and peers.

This phase is also replete with potential stumbling blocks. No matter how well you have designed the project, it is now highly visible, it is on an externally imposed time table, and changing external conditions will invariably affect the project. For example, one significant change that occurred early during the *La Biblioteca* grant was the resignation of the Silver Falls Library District's Youth Services Librarian, a key figure in the grant project. Fortunately, granting agencies realize that these things occur and have mechanisms for making adjustments during the implementation phase; in our situation it required adjustments to the operations schedule but did not affect the project objectives.

The primary challenge during the implementation phase of the grant is to strike a balance between sustaining regular library operations and the intense time commitment of an exciting but brief project. This balance must be found in your own use of time, in the library staff's energy and focus, and even in managing the community expectations. We are still in the early part of the third phase of the *La Biblioteca* grant, and one challenge we are facing is communicating to the public that the relatively pathetic amount of Spanish materials they see on the shelves today represents only a small portion of what is planned or on order for the entire project. Another challenge is keeping those staff members not directly involved in the grant enthused about their normal duties as they see some of their coworkers involved in stimulating new activities. In our case, one element of the grant was Spanish language lessons for two pivotal staff members. We have been able to extend that grant section to include several other staff members as they have shown interest.

Another key element of phase three is keeping the project on track. Of the various project management skills you will need in this phase, perhaps the most useful is some type of suspense file, which can be as simple as post-it notes on a calendar. Your activities in this phase will be guided by the requirements of the grant contract. You will need to know your granting partner's rules on changing budget items or modifying grant activities; your best resource here is again the granting agency staff. You also need to be sure that you keep meticulous records, including photographs, and that you promptly meet every report and evaluation deadline. The granting agency's perception of the project rests to a great degree on the quality and timeliness of your reports; again this shows that the library is a responsible partner and, perhaps more importantly, it prepares the ground for future proposals.

Two Silver Falls Library District staff members, Wanda Jenkins (second from left) and Shelly Brown (far right) were able to join a weekly Spanish language class provided by the City of Silverton.

To sum up the third phase, the library must keep the grant project implementation on track despite the unexpected changes that occur. In addition, staff concerns and public expectations need to be managed while keeping true to the initial statement of the library's need developed in the first phase.

The Fourth Phase: Back to the Real World

…saca tus sueños al sol, que los sueños tienen picos
—Astor Piazzolla

The fourth and final phase consists of those activities which immediately follow the termination of a grant. Some forethought should go into the process of how to gracefully ease out of the grant at the end of project. A key element here involves integration of the newly developed grant services into the library's regular range of services. As you have already planned for the resources needed to maintain the new collections or services, this becomes primarily an issue of staff work flow and public perception.

The fourth phase is also the time to take advantage of the grant's effect of making the library more visible within the community, and to put some effort into retaining the new patrons attracted to the library during the third phase. You should also continue to invest in the community partnerships that you relied on during the earlier phases. It is essential to give public credit to the vital role played by the granting agency as well. At its best, a successful grant project will give the entire community a brighter, broader vision of your library.

To sum up the fourth phase, the library needs to integrate the new grant collections and services seamlessly into its full range of offerings. Efforts must be made to appreciate and retain the new patrons and community partnerships developed during the grant. Appropriate credit should be given to the granting agency for your library's success. And finally, you must prepare to repeat the phases with your next grant project!

[1] *http://www.olaweb.org/pld/index.html*

[2] *This became an electronic element, with the moderated discussion list* SOL: Spanish in Our Libraries. *List moderator: Bruce Jensen; the SOL site: http://skipper.gseis.ucla.edu/students/bjensen/html/sol.htm*

Thinking Locally First

by Sue Jenkins, Library Director
Driftwood Public Library

In thinking about this issue of the OLA Quarterly, I found myself examining some of our past experiences in finding grant support for projects at our library. While we furnished our current space with a LSCA grant in 1993, and have received humanities funding from the National Endowment for the Arts for a poetry study series, our success rate has been the highest with grants from local sources. Even though the formal request process may not be as involved, finding local funding outside the library budget should be based on the same premise as all grant programs, that of creating opportunity for both the library and the donor group through needs assessment and prioritization.

The following recommendations focus on the design and information collection necessary to build a grants resource file. This material can be gathered in paper form and put into a tickler file structure for retrieval and use, but I would recommend the creation of a resource file on the hard drive of your desktop computer as well. Many of the sources we use for our assessment and need documentation statements are also available electronically.

Community Assessment
If we think of the library as a clear sphere of services and programs, the community is the fiber that connects and supports the sphere. At the center of the sphere is the reason for having a public library: the user. Assessment of all three components of the sphere structure is necessary to fully establish a priority of services and programs to meet the needs of the user.

Defining the community by gathering and analyzing demographic information is the formal way to fill in the blanks of who uses your library. Sources for this information include your local census records, community development departments, school districts, chambers of commerce, economic development offices, and local community colleges. Each of these agencies gather information and document their "customers" in various ways, and all of this information is public in so far as it is statistical and not of a personal nature. Most agencies will send your library a copy of published reports or answer queries. This process needs to become habitual and should involve your reference staff as well as staff who index your newspaper and keep your public documents section current.

To balance all of the statistics, on-site observations should be synthesized. Talk with other library staff on a regular basis about changes noticed in user groups. Get out on lunch hours and walk the library neighborhood and as much of the community as you can. Drive through the areas where your rural library users reside. How many new houses are being built? What kind of new businesses are springing up to fill the gaps left by older businesses closing out? How many senior care residences do you serve? How many gated neighborhoods are in your service area? Is the employment base of your community changing because of a new factory or shopping mall? Where are the recreation sites in your town and who uses them?

Since the library is also part of the community, on-going assessments of programs and service levels should be habitual as well. Note changes in circulation patterns, reference and inter-library loan requests, as well as how those applying for new library cards compare with new users of the past few years. Is the percentage of children using the library the same? Are you seeing more retired users, as your town is becoming known as a "best place for golden years?" Are more and more of your customers bilingual or involved in a particular occupation or trade? Is your student use up? Or down? How does your mission statement and long range plan address these issues?

Community Connections
What other local groups is your library connected to? Make a list, with contact persons and mailing addresses, of all the local civic groups in your town, the social service agencies, education providers, elected officials, media serving your area, local and regional foundations, and active library supporters and volunteers. Make sure you include their websites and email addresses. This information can be kept as separate lists, or put into a database for retrieval. These are the people you will send your newsletters and other publications to as well as invitations to library events. And, of course, you will note what they may have given you and when you thanked them. Keeping this information current needs to be an ongoing process, and when the file is created you will have not only a master mailing list for the library, but a greater awareness of the "people wealth" in your community and your library's relationship to that wealth. Everyone on the staff and board can and should contribute to this list. It should be available to all staff for publicity purposes as well as for general community knowledge.

The Wish List—where should it come from?
We all have a wish list, stuck away in a desk drawer or the back of our minds, of things that would improve our library. If you don't have such a list started, I suggest that asking your staff what they need to improve the way they do their jobs will quickly generate the beginning of a wish list. Add to that list any opportunities that exist in other libraries that your users do not now have. Once you have the list started, separate the contents into hard and soft resources. Hard resources

are tangibles, like buildings or magazine racks. Soft resources are either short lived—collection materials and onetime events—or they are truly intangible such as program support for poetry readings, art exhibits to grace the library, or an endowment to insure enhancement funds for the future. Don't limit yourself or your staff on ideas, just get it started and sort it out now and then into immediate, soon, and "gee, we wish" priorities. Then share it with your staff and volunteers so everyone knows what is needed.

Reaching out—local partnerships

Once the wish list is made, go back to your database and see who might be a funding source or program partner for a bright idea. Perhaps several of your local clubs together could fund a program; we have three organizations as our major Summer Reading Club underwriters. Look closely at your local businesses to see if any of them are part of a national or regional organization that has a corporate giving division. Call the local manager and ask; if nothing else, he or she will become aware of the library. You might also want to organize some of your possible local sources into those capable of funding hard or soft resources. If a local club adopts part of the library collection as a focus for community support, a small amount given over the years will add up to steady enhancement. Our library enjoys an excellent large print section due to the ongoing support of our Lions Club, Eagles Auxiliary, and our Friends group. I include these examples of local support because so many of us think of "grants" as big dollar gifts from afar when some of our best opportunities come from our own communities. Local organizations can also partner with your library in a grant application that will have much more appeal and integrity as a joint venture than as a solo solicitation.

Putting it all together

This is the part that can be the most daunting and the most creative. Looking at your wish list and knowing your community and the changes that are occurring should bring into focus what needs to be acquired first. If it is a small or onetime need that can be funded locally, send out some proposal letters to your local funders and ask to speak to them at their next meeting. Keep the letter (and the talk) specific, stating your need and how you think the particular group or business can help fulfill that need for the library and the community at large. If you are targeting a specific group of users such as children or senior citizens, make sure to include the group or business connection to the user group. Remember that the goal of your proposal letter, as in all grant applications, is to create opportunity for the library users and opportunity for the granting organization to be part of the library by providing community support. Most local groups and businesses will respond within a month so you should know fairly soon where you are in the request process.

Many foundations will entertain proposal letters as well, and will send you an application package if they feel your request is appropriate to their mission. Doing research in foundation directories will help you to narrow your focus to those foundations that target library, educational, and humanities support. A phone call to the contact person listed in the directory can also be helpful to make sure you meet the grant awards cycle established by the foundation board. Again, be succinct in your inquiry, whether it is by telephone or letter. And, make sure you send a thank-you to the individual who helps you along the way.

Each grant application will be different, but there are certain basic requirements for every application, however short.

1. Establish a time line for each grant so you know when applications are due. Mail the application in plenty of time to meet the deadline. Enter the date of mailing in your time line. Late applications are rarely accepted.

2. Fill in every blank, even when the information requested seems redundant.

3. Use the most current information at your disposal and be prepared to provide supporting documentation if necessary. This is especially true if a project budget is part of the application.

4. Request any letters of support in plenty of time to include them in the application packet.

5. Proofread the final draft; have someone else from your staff do so as well.

6. Provide all the copies requested and make sure you keep a couple for your own file.

7. If you get the grant, publicize it like crazy and send off an immediate thank-you to the grantor and any one else who helped you with the application.

8. Arrange a photo opportunity that includes representatives from the granting agency and those who supported the application.

9. If you don't get the grant, write a letter of thanks to the grantors for their consideration of your application.

10. Many foundations or groups will also tell you why you were not funded so that you can improve on the application and reapply for the next award cycle.

Using grants as sources of funding for projects, seed money, programming, or collection development can be a very creative process. It can feel sort of like working on several jigsaw puzzles at once, if you are putting more than one grant into a project. However,

See Thinking Locally *page 16*

"Who, Me?" I thought, when my director asked me to write an article for the OLA Quarterly

by Jill Heffner
Driftwood Public Library

"Who, Me?" That was the reaction I had three years ago when my new director handed me the *Ready-to-Read* grant application. I had never written a grant before, but I knew that it was terribly hard and terribly involved. Why, I knew people who had taken workshops on how to write grants! And my friends in other libraries were always busy and harried and frustrated from writing grants. Writing grants was a difficult thing to do. And now my new director was asking me to apply for the *Ready-to-Read* grant. Oh no! "Okay," I told my director, "but I may need some help; I've never done this before."

She handed me the grant application.

Oh wow, then I did feel slightly silly—this application was EASY! Fill-in-the-blanks. I could do that. I had been filling in the blanks for years, and I was good at it. I LOVED filling in the blanks!

Name of applicant. Address of applicant. Contact person. Phone number. No problem so far. I had this under control.

Purpose of the *Ready-to-Read* grant. Okay. This might be a little tricky. But, wait! I had an idea! I knew what I wanted money for. It had been a thought in my head for a long time. I don't know where it had come from—reading professional journals or listening to other librarians at conferences and workshops, or just seeing a need in my community—but I knew what I wanted to do. There was no question in my mind.

Our community, Lincoln City, is rather unique in our geography. As most of you know, our main street is Highway 101 and it runs for about seven miles. All business and government is located on the highway. Our library sits next to the highway, which on a busy, sunny day can see over 10,000 vehicles go by. This is not a community where the kids can walk or ride their bikes or skateboard to the library—or anywhere! So how do kids get to the library? Their parents have to drive them here. What if parents can't, for one reason or another, bring their kids to the library? Well, too bad. Okay, so if the kids can't come to the library, maybe we can go to the kids.

The previous year I had been going with the children's program coordinator from Parks and Rec to a low income housing complex in the Taft area of town, about five miles from the library. I would do story time and Norma Jean would do crafts. We had chosen this particular housing complex, called The Ridge, because it was the only one that had a community room.

Now my idea was to do a kids' outreach at The Ridge. Maybe I could take books up there one day a week after school for kids and parents of pre-schoolers to check out. But I was hesitant to take "real" library books there as the population was transient and there wasn't much accountability that I could see. I was afraid I'd lose too many library books. But what if I had an outreach collection, just for that purpose? What if I had a lot of inexpensive paperbacks that wouldn't be too badly missed if they were lost?

And so the idea of a Children's Outreach program was born, and here was a grant that would buy those books.

Choosing books during the Children's Outreach program at The Ridge.

Jill Heffner shares books with kids from The Ridge.

Purpose of the *Ready-to-Read* grant. Service or program. Target Audience. Not a problem now; I knew what I wanted to do with this grant money, I just had to fill in the blanks.

Measurable Activities. That was easy.

1. Provide outreach services.
2. Establish a lending library.

Proposed budget. That was easy too, as the *Ready-to-Read* grant allocates funds to each library based on a per capita calculation of children served. I would ask for all that I was allowed.

And that was pretty much it. There was some other financial and demographic information that I needed, but I got it from the library director and the city's financial officer. The director signed the grant application. Then the city manager signed it. I mailed it in. And there, it was done. I had "written" a grant!

Writing the *Ready-to-Read* grant was easy, receiving the funds was easier, and spending the money was the easiest of all. Imagine having "lots of money" to spend on children's and young adult books—it was like sitting down to a feast and indulging yourself to your heart's content! I bought paperback copies of all kinds of books: fiction and non-fiction; picture books; classics; young adult reluctant readers; easy readers. It was really fun!

Then came the hard part—going to The Ridge every Wednesday after school, week after week, month after month, and now, year after year. It was difficult at first. The Ridge has a program director (I've gone through three of them now). But when I started this outreach program, Laura was the Program Director. She was trying very hard to have programs after school and not be used as a baby-sitting service. It was not easy. The kids, who ranged from age six through thirteen, hung out at the community room. Some of them had no place else to go. Several cold, rainy days I've heard young grade school kids ask if they could stay there because they were locked out of their apartments until "Mom comes home."

The end of another successful library day at The Ridge.

The kids that first year were unruly, sometimes rude, and very hyperactive. One time there was a screaming and yelling scene between one of the mothers of a teenage girl and the aunt and grandmother of two other teens. The altercation spilled into the community room where the little kids and I were reading. I was appalled and surprised at such a scene. Laura managed to shoo the adults back outside, but what really shocked me was that while this was going on, none of the kids looked up or paid any attention. Were they just used to such occurrences, or were they so really engrossed in their reading? Well, of course, I'd like to think it was the latter. Laura tried everything she could—talking to the parents, writing contracts with the kids. It was not pleasant. Wednesday afternoons I would often beg my co-workers to please just shoot me in the foot so I wouldn't have to go to The Ridge.

The premise of this outreach was to sign up kids with library cards and let them check out books. As the program refined itself, we learned to limit the checkouts to two books at a time. At first the kids were running in, checking out books, leaving, running back in, leaving—so again, we refined the program and requested that they either check out books and leave, or stay and read. Soon, they were staying and reading. Sometimes Laura or I would read to them, sometimes they would read to each other, and sometimes they would go off into quiet corners and read silently to themselves. Those were the rewarding days. It warmed my heart to see these often hyperactive kids sitting and reading. One mother even told Laura that she had seen her child's reading level improve since the library had been coming to the complex.

Another thing that has kept me going back is a young Hispanic mother who doesn't speak English, but who comes to see me every other Wednesday to get books for her two preschoolers. Mrs. Reyes is very shy. I started out taking bilingual picture books to her, but soon she also began to take one or maybe two English picture books. I found out that she had an older boy who likes animals, so I began taking non-fiction books to her for "el nino." Now I also take adult Spanish books to her and she is so happy to have books to read in her own language. The smile on her face makes it all worthwhile to me. I also took Spanish books to the last program director who did not speak much English either. He, too, was thrilled to have books in his primary language. He thought I was wonderful, but, unfortunately, he was only there for about six weeks. Another person who thinks I'm wonderful is the mother of a teenaged, mentally handicapped son. Each week I bring easy readers for Sean, and they are both excited to have new books to read. Another teen likes to check out books on signing; we try to sign to each other (he's teaching me.)

When I am between program directors, the managers open up the community room for me and I conduct the program alone (which, actually, works really well.) Recently, the directors were not there to unlock the

door, but while I sat in the library van and waited for them to return, the kids came flocking up to get their new library books. I ended up just opening the side door of the van and checking out books right there on the sidewalk. Fortunately, it was one of those rare rain-free days on the coast. The kids were so excited to check out library books. The kids and I now have a good rapport, and there are no longer any behavior problems. Sometimes the teenage girls check out books and *TEEN* magazines and leave; other times they stay and we take turns reading to each other. When it's cold and raining, the ones who are locked out of their homes stay and read quietly. The Ridge has become a pleasant place to spend a Wednesday afternoon, and I look forward to it now. And to think it all began with a fill-in-the-blank *Ready-to-Read* grant!

National Connections

(Continued from page 7)

And what did new readers gain? Positive reading and discussion experiences, books to keep and share with family or friends, an introduction to the library and what it can provide, an excitement about education that has some of them searching out new educational opportunities, and the pleasure of reading and the humanities as lifelong joys. Participants, when asked in the final evaluations what they would choose if they could add one thing to the program, replied: to have more people come, to have more time for discussions, to have more sessions… and to have it not end!

If you would like more information on *National Connections* or would be interested in continuing to share ideas, experiences, successes and failures about serving the Hispanic community with other Oregon libraries please contact me at the McMinnville Public Library at (503) 435-5551 or by email at goldmad@ci.mcminnville.or.us.

Thinking Locally

(Continued from page 13)

A Resource Shelf

The following items are readily available in many large library reference sections or through inter-library loan for short periods of time for in-library use only. If you can manage the cost, I would recommend acquiring those texts marked with an *. I have included a few online resources to get your research started as well.

Cyberlibrary: *Grants and Fundraising*. http://www.lscc.cc.fl.us/library/cygra.htm/

The Foundation Center, http://www.fdncenter.org/

Hall, Mary, *Getting Funded: a Complete Guide to Proposal Writing, 3rd Edition,** 0-87678-070-2. Continuing Education Publications, Portland State University.

LibraryLand, *Administration: Grants, Budgeting, Fundraising,* http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/LibraryLand/admin/bud.htm

Miner, Lynn and Griffith, Jerry, *Proposal Planning and Writing,* 0-89774-726-7. Oryx Press, 1993

1999 Oregon Foundation Databook, McPherson, Craig, Ed., C & D Publishing, Portland, OR 97205, http://www.foundationdatabook.com

Winning Grant Proposals, Frost, Gordon, Ed., 0-930807-36-7. Fundraising Institute, Rockville, MD 20852

Summer Reading 2000

Dear OLA Members and *Quarterly* Readers:

The Library's Children's Services Division (CSD) is proud to present the Summer 2000 Reading Program. This year, as a result of an experiment that CSD and the OLA executive board decided to undertake, all libraries in Oregon are receiving free materials to support their programs. These will include manuals, posters, stickers, bookmarks, certificates, and tattoos. 125 Oregon libraries will receive a $200 Programming Grant to bring a professional entertainer to their library. Each library has received a packet of information that can help them use this sponsorship to their best advantage. The packet includes hints on how to thank sponsors, how to write press releases, and templates such as this border to help each library advertise their programs.

The experiment was basically this: hire a company (in this case, Metropolitan Group of Portland) to investigate the possibilities of fund-raising and sponsors for our Summer Reading Program. Note the word hire. It costs money to have professionals do this work, and the OLA executive board agreed to help CSD with this endeavor. The board gave CSD $5,000 to get the project going; then they loaned the Division another $5,000. Finally, Metropolitan Group found sponsors and grants that enabled CSD to provide this wonderful program for libraries across the state (and repay OLA the $5,000 loan!).

This year's Summer Library supporters include Craig Berkman, who was honored by OLA as Library Supporter of the Year for 2000 and named Legislator of the Year in 1998; the Wells Fargo Foundation; the Oregon Community Foundation; and the Washington Mutual Foundation. Oregon Public Broadcasting signed on as our statewide media sponsor, and will run Summer Reading radio and television spots this summer. In addition, both Safeway and Fred Meyer have agreed to promote summer reading on their grocery bags, so look for information about our theme, "Ticket to Tomorrow" next time you shop for groceries.

As for next year, the Summer Reading Task Force is already hard at work making the statewide program even better—and looks forward to hearing from libraries around the state about how the programming grants, enhanced publicity, and free materials have made a difference to local summer reading programs.

Best wishes for a reading filled summer,

Angela J. Reynolds
Summer Reading 2000 Chair

Presented by:
Oregon Library Association

Sponsored by:
the Craig Berkman family
WELLS FARGO Foundation
OPB