

tory of federal government documents since 1891, and a point of access to electronic government information;

✓ The Oklahoma Publications Clearinghouse, which manages the state's depository library program, insuring the public access to state government publications and documents; and

✓ Information Services, which provides reference, book circulation and interlibrary loan to state government agencies and employees.

In addition to serving state government and libraries, ODL also assists the general public through its unique collections. The agency is also responsible for publishing the Oklahoma Almanac, formerly called the Directory of Oklahoma, a major reference source on Oklahoma government and the state.

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE ...

While technology is affecting how ODL delivers its services and maintains its collections, Clark said some services will change little. Two cases in point: the Summer Reading Program for children, and the adult literacy program.

This summer, thousands of children will participate in Panda-Monium in the Library,

the 28th statewide reading program offered through the Department of Libraries. Storytimes, entertainment and reading contests will be featured.

"Many smaller libraries don't have the funds to purchase materials individually for summer programs," Clark said. "It's a lot cheaper to order large quantities of bookmarks, reading logs and posters and share them with libraries throughout the state."

Clark said children who continue to read during their summer vacations are better prepared for the school year. "And the summer program makes reading fun for kids, and kids love to have fun."

Adult literacy programs are benefiting from special computer tutorial programs, but the anchor of the program is the one-on-one tutoring between a volunteer and adult new reader. "Libraries have addressed the problems of adult functional illiteracy better than any other institution in America," Clark said.

"There is little funding for literacy, but generous people throughout the state are volunteering their time and skills to improve the lives of their fellow citizens. Almost 100 volunteer literacy councils are operating around the state, most of them through the local public library."

The ODL Literacy Office has been honored with a national library public relations award this year for its statewide campaign 'Learn to Read and the World Opens Wide.' More than 2,800 new tutors and adult new readers were recruited by councils around the state.

Clark said the literacy program is an example of the impact the agency is able to make with limited staff and resources.

"The Kentucky State Library and Archives has similar duties to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. The Kentucky Library has 140 employees. We have 80 employees. I'm not saying we wouldn't benefit from having a larger staff, I'm saying the Oklahoma citizens get a lot of bang for their buck," said Clark.

Libraries, Clark said, are among the most efficient public institutions in the country. A 1993 Gallup Poll found that public libraries receive less than one percent of all tax dollars, but are used by more than 50 percent of the population.

By efficiently using that money to meet the traditional needs of library patrons and to rise to the challenge of rapidly changing technology, the Oklahoma Department of Libraries shows THAT'S GOOD FOR OKLAHOMA!

Robert L. Clark, Jr.

Robert Clark joined the Oklahoma Department of Libraries as Director in September, 1976. He was not a stranger to the ODL, as he had worked there from 1968 to 1973, first as Director of the Division of Archives and Records and then as Data Processing Coordinator. After leaving ODL, he worked in Mississippi, first for the Jackson Metropolitan Library System and then as Director of the Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System.

In addition to his duties as director of ODL, Clark also serves as Secretary of the Archives & Records Commission, Secretary of the Library Services & Construction Act Advisory Council, and is a member of the State-wide Data Processing and Telecommunications Committee.

Clark has received the following gubernatorial appointments: Oklahoma Historical Records Advisory Board, Governor's Task Force on Libraries and to the Mini Cabinet on Education.

He has served on the following state level committees: Education Outreach Advisory Committee to Board of Regents for Higher Education, 1993-1989; Advisory Committee to President of University of Oklahoma, 1985-1987; and Regents Library Advisory Committee, 1989-1991.

Clark is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma, is affiliated with several professional associations and has numerous publication credits to his name.

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