



STAFF NEWSLETTER OF THE
METROPOLITAN LIBRARY SYSTEM

November 15, 2017

Library Discourse

Finding Heritage in the Library

Darin Smith



During a lull, I walked up to circulation to see if there was anything I could attend to. There was a customer waiting, so I asked her if I could help.

"Do you have a place where you keep old newspapers?" she asked.

"Yes, let me show you."

We walked over to the microfilm and picked out a box for the Oklahoman from 1970. She wanted August 19th or 20th.

"I found out I was adopted and was mislead about who my father was, and I think he was in the paper. He was killed. I never would have known, but I talked to his sister and she said he always carried a fake ID, so I had overlooked it cause he was the wrong age."

She went on to tell me that because of a DNA test and her own sleuthing, she had discovered his name, and had also discovered how he had died.

We loaded the film and sure enough, there he was. Tragically, he died when a refrigerated truck electrocuted him at the young age of 19. The article listed his age as 21. He was front page news on August 20th, 1970.

The woman I was helping knew that he had died, but it had somehow made the information more present.

"Wow, that's him. Wow. That's Him. Wow," she kept repeating.

I just stood there. It had never occurred to me that we would be reliving a moment in time in the 1970's, while standing in the library, staring at a screen, with a short article in front of us. But the past had now become present.

She gathered her thoughts and we moved on to printing the article.

"Do you have any old yearbooks?" she asked.

"Yes, we do, upstairs. I can't make any guarantees, but I'll take a look. Where did he go to high school?"

"John Marshall. It would have been 1967, 1968, 1969."

"I'll take a look and I'll be right back."

I walked into compact shelving and sure enough, there they were, the John Marshall High School yearbooks that she wanted. We found her birth father in them, and again she was visibly shaken.

"That's him, oh my gosh, that's him."

She showed me a picture of her son. "See?"

They looked identical.

She made copies of the yearbook pictures. She seemed relieved, happy, and sad all at the same time. She had come to the end of a road. She knew the story, and there was the evidence that it was all real right there in front of her. She thanked me for the help and then she left.

It really made me think, of all the things we keep. I don't think I ever would have thought a newspaper article from August of 1970, and a couple of high school yearbooks would be the most important items of that day. For this woman and her mystery, they were the most important pieces of our collection. She actually saw her father in that yearbook, and maybe left the library with some measure of closure. It was certainly more real for her.

Library Genealogy Resources:

[HeritageQuest Online](#)

[Fold3](#)

[America's GenealogyBank](#)

And more!

Coming Up

Regular Commission Meeting @ ED
Nov. 16

Deadline to Complete Harrassment and Discrimination Training

Nov. 17

Deadline to Complete Slips, Trips, and Falls Training

Dec. 31

Intranet Briefs

A note about Kindle titles & OverDrive's recent update - Users have experiences issues in which the link to the Amazon page is broken. They must uncheck the *Kindle preference* box.

Meeting Minutes

•**Safety Committee**

•**Access Services**

•**Leadership Team**

•**Library Managers**

•Oct. 26

•Nov. 9

United Way Campaign - The United Way 2017 Campaign is underway! You can opt to donate via payroll deduction.

SD '17 Survey Results - Your feedback will help make SD '18 even better! View the results of the survey on the intranet.

Digital Dash - This is a checkout challenge in digital circulation from Overdrive. This year's goal for the Metropolitan Library System is 1,428,858 circulations and we are 83% there!

Virtual Library Update - The Virtual Library opened Monday Sept. 11 and has been operating 70 hours per week. They are contacted about 60 times per day, answering about 58 questions per day, and Tuesday is their busiest day.

Have a story idea?

Have a completed story?

Email IC!

victoria.garten@metrolibrary.org

"We grow smarter communities, one person at a time."

Citizenship Program Looks to the Future

SO and ED Offer Citizenship Program

Today's library is an evolving atmosphere and librarians are equipped with new technologies and perhaps more opportunities than ever before to create lifelong library members. With a growing immigrant population in the United States, libraries offer key services to new Americans, such as local literacy programs.

from over 35 countries. The program works together with the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TEFOL) program at Oklahoma City University (OCU), and professor Dr. Robert Griffin to offer a complete course including language tutoring, individualized and group tutoring, and civics instruction.

a part of the future of the library, one with a community that spans cultures.

More than 40 million people living in the United States today were born in another country, according to a PEW Research study. As the U.S. continues to grow a diverse population, library programs such as citizenship programs become

who are enrolled in the citizenship course. Tolbert said he had a student from Ghana, West Africa who made an impression on him.

"He came to me a few weeks after the class and informed me that he had completed the questions from the Immigration office and was going to take the Oath of Allegiance in a couple of weeks. I was so

"HE CAME TO ME A FEW WEEKS AFTER THE CLASS AND INFORMED ME THAT HE HAD COMPLETED THE QUESTIONS FROM THE IMMIGRATION OFFICE AND WAS GOING TO TAKE THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS. I WAS SO EXCITED WHEN HE CAME TO THE LIBRARY AND SHOWED ME THE CERTIFICATE, THAT I MADE A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT TO ALL STAFF AND LISTENERS IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA."

What began as a collaboration between the Oklahoma Department of Libraries and the local library systems to oversee a few Citizenship Corners, areas designated across the country to serve non-native speakers, became four unique literacy programs throughout the state of Oklahoma.

Oklahoma is home to more than 218 thousand immigrants and library services can provide relief to those unsure of what step to take next. The programs are part of an Oklahoma Department of Libraries project funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

The Southern Oaks and Edmond Library Citizenship Classes helped 38 immigrants become citizens in the first two years of the program and has worked with immigrants

"I believe that library staff members play a vital role in welcoming the diverse group of newcomers coming to our community," OCU professor Dr. Robert Griffin said. "Patience, understanding, and empathy can go quite a way to making the library a positive place for community interaction and involvement. However, in my experience at the Metro libraries, these positive attributes are certainly not lacking."

Librarians are posed with both the opportunity and the challenge of meeting the needs of a diverse population, and Griffin says the library serves as a "safe haven to introduce people to their new surroundings".

These new Americans are not only potential lifelong library users, but

more and more important.

"We encourage obtaining library cards and promote related books and other materials, as well as other programs that may be of further interest. Because many of the students in the class are bi-lingual and speak Spanish, we also use this as an opportunity to promote our Spanish language collection, which has expanded over the years," Southern Oaks Adult Librarian Phil Tolbert said.

The library also tries to promote these services in multiple ways to reach the community. Flyers are translated into both Spanish and Vietnamese and distributed to area businesses.

The program has become important to staff as well as those

excited when he came to the library and showed me the certificate, that I made a public announcement to all staff and listeners in the immediate area," Tolbert said.

The program includes roughly four to five student teachers at each library location who teach twice per week for one and a half hours. The classes are open to the public and designed to accommodate any level of language proficiency.

Read more about Immigration and Citizenship Services on the [ODL page](#).



"We grow smarter communities, one person at a time."

SL Shelf Life

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**HOW DID YOU
HONOR VETERANS
AT YOUR LIBRARY?**



Southern Oaks Library honored veterans with a Veterans Day book display, created by Darrie Breathwit.



This week is the final week to give to the United Way Play it Forward campaign.

You have until Wednesday, Nov. 22 to send your form to Denise in the accounting office.

Keep in mind that you can choose to support a local organization of your choice by designating your funds using the agency codes in the brochure you received or accessing them [HERE](#).

Southern Oaks Adult Engagement Specialist, Darrie Breathwit, opts to designate her funds for Community Literacy Centers every year. Community Literacy Centers provide adult education

classes at Southern Oaks to help the nearly 140 thousand adults in the Oklahoma City area who are functionally illiterate.

What organizations do you designate your gift to? What do these local organizations mean to you?

The BC Clark Foundation has agreed to match all funds, so your \$10 donation will mean \$20 for local charitable organizations.

****Keep in Mind that payroll deductions will be taken from 24 pay periods (not 26).****

Resource Highlights

Native American Heritage Month

American Indian History Online

- This database gives users access to primary sources, maps, videos, and more. Searches can be conducted by keyword, topic, or era.

Killers of the Flower Moon (Metro Library Material)

- After oil was discovered beneath the land of the Osage Indian nation in Oklahoma, they were some of the richest in the world. Gradually, they were murdered and their killings became one of the first major FBI homicide cases.

NaNoWriMo - Still Chugging Along!



**Want to
write a
NOVEL
in November?**

Literary Reference Center Plus - This database has full-text stories, author biographies, literary criticism, and essays.

Poetry and Short Story Reference Center

- Check out poetry from one of your favorite poets, read a few short stories, or just stop in to read the featured poem of the day for inspiration.

Oklahoma Authors Database - This database is a list of Oklahoma authors, past and present.

For more information on these databases, [contact Sadie Bruce](#).

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