

# ShelfLife

Newsletter of the Metropolitan Library System

DEC. 2002

## Donna Morris Named New MLS Executive Director



**New MLS Executive Director,  
Donna Morris**

*At the Nov. 21 MLS Commission meeting, Donna Morris was officially named MLS Executive Director, after serving three-and-a-half months as Acting Executive Director.*

Donna Morris, a 33-year veteran of the Metropolitan Library System, has been named by the Metropolitan Library Commission as the System's new Executive Director. Morris replaces Norman Maas, who resigned in August.

Morris, who began her employment with the library as a clerk at the Belle Isle Library in 1969, has been serving as Acting Executive Director since August 2002. She was named executive director at the Commission's meeting on Nov. 21.

"I'm very excited by this appointment," Morris said, "and honored to be the one who will lead this great library system to even more accomplishments in the years ahead."

Morris, a native of Kansas City, MO, holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Central Oklahoma in Elementary Education and a Master of Library Science degree from the University of Oklahoma.

Morris believes her training in education helped her land her first significant job with the library.

"Except for student teaching, I never did any classroom teaching, but I think that training helped me when I became a

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*Donna Morris continued from page 1*

part-time Children's Librarian. When I discovered the nature of library work, I fell in love with it.

"There are interesting puzzles in answering reference questions," she said, "and I just loved researching them. People come to you with questions they need answers to and you have to find the information they need. Now that's fun."

Morris and her husband, Kenny, have two sons, Jeff, a student at the University of Oklahoma, and Matt, who hopes to enroll at OU next spring. They are a close knit family that enjoys spending time together.

"I read a lot, which I guess is just what you'd expect a librarian to do," she said with a smile, "but we spend a lot of time watching and participating in sports, too. We enjoy clear water scuba diving, swimming, boating and snow skiing. We haven't been skiing in several years, but I'd love to get back on the slopes. My guys play a lot of golf, and I join them sometimes, though I'm not very good at it.

"I probably shouldn't admit this, but I love computer games, and during the winter months, I like to work jigsaw puzzles. And don't tell anyone, but I like to go shopping. In fact, I love to go shopping," she added with the big smile

that library employees know so well.

"And no one suspects this, but I'm a pretty good cook."

The closeness of the Morris family provided much needed support in 1994 when she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

"I had a fast growing, aggressive tumor, and I was told then that there was a 50 percent chance of recurrence. Well, I did beat it, and so far there has been no sign of a return."

Morris leaned back in her chair as the memory of those frightening days rushed over her.

"I know you hear this a lot, but the experience did make me a stronger person. It also put things into better perspective," she said. "I realized as never before how important my family is to me, and how good it is to have a job you enjoy doing with people you like to spend time with.

"I was lucky in that I'm a positive person. Attitude plays such an important role in recovery. I wouldn't give in to it. That experience taught me a lot about myself and about the people I love, but I tell you," she added, "I do not want to do it again."

Having met and won the greatest



challenge of her life, Morris is now prepared to face the challenges of her new job: several building projects, a big jump in usage of library services and a flat budget.

"We have a lot of changes in store," she admitted, "whether we like it or not. Meeting them will keep us busy for years to come.

"The new Downtown Library Learning Center will be opening next year, and we are well into the planning stages for a new library facility to serve the far northwest area of the county. We hope to locate it on the Francis Tuttle campus, and we should be ready to open the doors within five years. A small pocket in the southwestern part of the county, near the airport, does not have an easily accessible library, and Edmond is growing so fast we may have to look at another expansion there within the next 10 to 25 years.

"We cannot stand still and continue to meet the informational and recreational needs of the people who have come to depend on us. We will also maintain the relationships we've already forged with our neighboring communities," she said.

But Morris is not content to merely continue doing what the library system

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*Donna Morris continued from page 2*

has already proven it does so well.

"To be viable 50 years from now," she added, "we must strengthen the advances we've begun in literacy and early childhood development programming. Our Family Place initiative, through which parents and children can come to selected libraries to play and learn together, has proven to be an overwhelming success, and we intend to expand it to more library locations.

"Of course, in order to do that, and to create programs that meet current and future community needs," she noted, "we must ensure that we have the resources to provide consistent service.

"Whenever there is a downturn in the economy, more people depend on the public library to help them. Financing will continue to be a problem we have to face straight on," she noted.

And Donna Morris is the right person to meet those challenges.

She has been deeply involved in designing a new library building for the city of Choctaw after the old building was devastated by tornadoes in May of 1999. The new Choctaw Library will open next year.

She has also contributed to planning the new Downtown Library and Learning Center, which is now about 70 percent

complete.

"The problems with the outside panels are not resolved at this time," she said, "but work on the inside of the building is continuing, and we expect to take possession of the building next summer and open the doors next fall.

"The facility will be spectacular, and we know that the Learning Center will be heavily used. The Downtown Consortium will depend on it to house classes, meetings, even conventions. I think the people of Oklahoma County are going to be amazed and delighted at what we are going to be able to provide them."

Donna Morris, who has devoted more than half her life to bringing the best possible library service to her community, leaned forward.

"You know, library usage will be up 20 percent by the end of this year. We are growing stronger all the time, and we've done it by providing great public service. If we are to continue this growth—and we will—we will have to continue to give the public not just what it wants, but what it needs. We are in a great position now to do that."

With her interest in early childhood development, library planning, serving the public and, always, OU sports, Morris is ready to move into the future with the same excitement she's always brought to

her family, her life and her job.

And for her, the best is always just around the corner.

**Doug Bentin, PR**

**Congratulations**

**Denyvetta Davis  
& Bob Burke!**

**on the  
publication  
of your  
biography of**

**Ralph Ellison**



## CONSTRUCTION ZONE

### News from the Construction Guy: Todd Olberding

#### **New Choctaw Library**

While we have had some rain, the majority of the earthwork below the building has been completed. The last of the perimeter foundation footings were placed on Nov. 19. The next major step is to complete the underground mechanical and electrical work, which is underway and also requires dry weather. This work should be completed in mid December, and will be followed by the placement of the concrete slab.

While the "project schedule" still indicates substantial completion as of August 30, 2003, the contractor has reserved its right for additional time due to the recent rain delays. At present, the contract has not requested that this time be officially added. This is part of the "normal" construction process and is

being left open until all weather issues can be addressed.

#### **Downtown Library**

While there is still no word on the panels, there is a great deal of time and effort being expended on all sides to reconcile this issue.

The interior wall construction is close to 80 percent complete. The building is 99 percent watertight and some temporary heat has been turned on. This has allowed painting to begin this past month.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) for the purchase of the telephone and data cabling work has been issued. This work is scheduled to be awarded at the December 12 MLS Commission meeting.

Please feel free to e-mail any building questions you would like addressed to [tolberding@metrolibrary.org](mailto:tolberding@metrolibrary.org).

### MLS Customers Donate 7,293 Pounds of Food for Regional Food Bank

Food For Fines is officially over. The grand total of food collected was 7,253 pounds. Jessica Spanglehour, Regional Food Bank marketing director, said we were off just 40 pounds from last year.

This year, however, some of our

pickups didn't get counted. So we figure we collected 7,293 pounds or more.

Thanks to everyone at each library involved in this special project. We hope it was a positive experience.

Comments regarding 2002 Food For Fines and suggestions for next year are:

Downtown's customers were enthusiastic and very happy to participate. The customers mentioned that they participated in food drives at work and at their children's schools.

The MLS is the only organization that rewards people for their generosity. I think that is a great customer relations tactic!

-- **Deborah Montgomery, DN**

I thought in general the Food For Fines drive went very well.

I felt though that the box for food that we received was in pretty poor condition, and I felt that if we were accepting food the week before and the week after the drive, why not just make it a whole month and not worry about it.

Thanks,

-- **Kelly Dalrymple, WA**

I really like the idea of doing a food drive. We are helping people get food and helping customers with fines and to do something nice. Customers seem to like it too. BUT, please don't have it at the same time every year. After all, food banks need food all the time.

## Food For Fines cont.

The reason I'm saying this is that if, human nature being what it is, a person knows he/she can check out a book and keep it until October, then bring in a can of something, guess when that book will come back? Meanwhile, the library may have already replaced the book thinking it was never coming back. I think it would be far better to maybe skip next October, for example, and have it in the summer, when I've heard food banks are often low because nobody thinks of donating then. And don't announce it too far in advance. And thank you very much for asking for comments.

**-- Ann Meeks, BI**

*Also thanks to Heidi Port, Volunteer Coordinator, who helped recruit volunteers. A volunteer, Chuck Henderson, went above and beyond by picking up food from the libraries each day. And a thank-you goes to our MLS maintenance guys, who picked up the leftovers.*



# People

## News From Cataloging

Brennan Hausburg, four-year-old son of Jana Hausburg, Cataloging, was chosen as October's Student of the Month for his grade. He is in preschool at Overholser Elementary. His teacher wrote, "Brennan has shown so much progress in every area of school. He has shown all of our life principles, which include respect, friendship, cooperation, honesty and responsibility."

## Village News

My grandson James Moody III (Trey) will be graduating from OU Dec. 14, 2002, with a degree in Management. His little brother John Colin Moody, a recent Casady graduate, is a freshman at OU.  
**-- Carol Moody, Library Assn't, VI**

## Congratulations!

To Melissa Weathers, MC, and Shellie Zeigler-Hill, DC. Both will be graduating from OU in December with a Master's Degree in Library Science. Congratulations to both!

## Kitties Need a Good Home



Two one-year-old cats need a loving home. Mimi is a spayed female tortoise shell. Sushi is a neutered black-and-white male. Both are litter trained and healthy. Please call Angel 755-0710

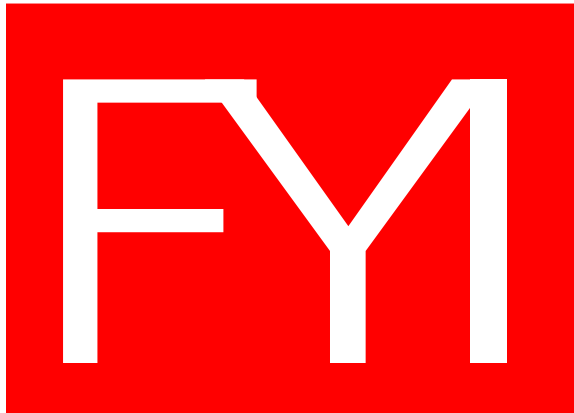
or e-mail [apablico@mls.lib.ok.us](mailto:apablico@mls.lib.ok.us) if interested.

Pictures are available upon request.

**-- Angel Pablico, Village**







### Welcome

Jaquay Morris	Page, BI
Cheryl Cherry	Circ Clerk, RE
Melissa Weathers	Assoc. Lib, MC
Cheryl Coleman	Page, BE
John Utley	Sys Op Tech II, IT

### Goodbye

Lori McClure	Page, MC
Irma Lozano	Page, CH
Kristina Hubbard	Page, VI

### Promoted

Cara Peters	From page to Assoc. Lib., CH
Kristen Keyser	From page to Circ Clerk, ED

### Transferring

LaVetta Dent	Librarian, VI, to Children's Svc. Coor., OUT
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### Retiring

Rugena Blonner      Mail/Serials, DN

### Sympathy

To Linda Armstead, MC, whose grandmother died. Services were to be held in New Jersey.

Sympathy also to Lena Loper, DC, whose mother died Nov. 17.



## A Recipe for the Holidays

### *Pumpkin Torte*

3 C. Pumpkin  
1 C. white sugar  
6 eggs  
2 tsp. cinnamon  
1 tsp. ginger  
1/4 tsp. cloves  
1 can sweetened condensed milk

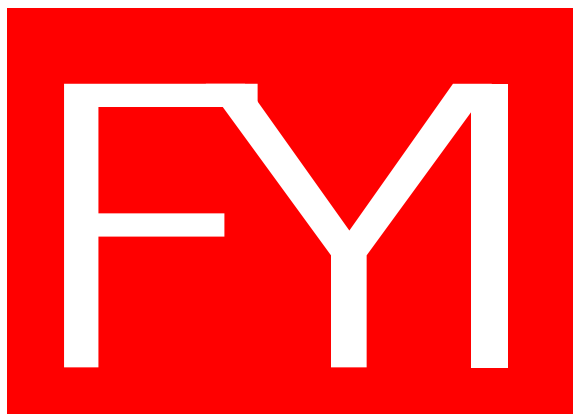
Mix above ingredients and place in a 9" x 13" pan.

Mix and crumble over the pumpkin mixture:

1 yellow cake mix  
1 stick butter - melted  
Top with 1 1/2 - 2 cups pecans.  
Bake at 325 degrees for one hour.

-- **Heidi Port/Volunteer Services**





## DEC Birthdays

KIMBERLY A. RICKEY	12/02
ABOLGHASEM SIAVASHI	12/03
MEGAN E. SMITH	12/03
MARY A. MAHAN	12/05
CHARLEEN K. MILLER	12/06
JO NITA WHITE	12/07
DEBORAH MONTGOMERY	12/09
VICTORIA E. DIXON	12/10
CATHY E. DEGIUSTI	12/11
TRACI N. JINKENS	12/12
WHITNEY B. ROBERTS	12/12
LORETTA G. FRANTZ	12/15
LINDA S. WINN	12/16
B. J. WILLIAMS	12/17
ANGEL PABICO	12/17
ROSEMARY A. CZARSKI	12/18
LISA BIRKLE RODANO	12/18
JASON E. EVANS	12/18
GERALDINE PRICE	12/19
LINDA S. GENS	12/20
SUSAN K. BECKETT	12/20
KRISTINA M. HUBBARD	12/22
CAROLADKISSON	12/22
ANGELA K. SANDERS	12/22

## DEC Birthdays continued

DOUGLAS G. BENTIN	12/22
SHARON S. WENZL	12/23
JESSIE C. BISHOP	12/24
MARY E. TAYLOR	12/27
KIMBERLY A. EDWARDS	12/28
C. LESLIE MCCLURE	12/28
PHILLIP E. TOLBERT	12/28
KENNETH SCHUTTENHELM	12/28
VERONICA BERNAL	12/30

## DEC Anniversaries

DARLENE R. QUINN	12/4/79
SHARLOTT WHITE BROWN	12/2/80
DOUGLAS BENTIN	12/26/85
LOUISA M. SMITH	12/13/88
ROSEMARY G. RYDEN	12/3/96
EDWARD MARAND	12/1/97
ERICA BURTON	12/2/99
JOAN G. KENDALL	12/20/99
GERALDINE PRICE	12/27/99
AMY UPCHURCH	12/29/99
STEVE V. PALMER	12/4/00
SHARON D. THOMPSON	12/11/00
KRISTIN J. EPPERSON	12/11/00
MEGAN C. MOORE	12/13/00
LINDA K. BIRCHETT	12/18/00
GAIL GARLOCH	12/26/00
MATTHEW E. EVANS	12/17/01
JENNIFER M. HUNTER	12/26/01
MARIAN JANE LECRONE	12/31/01

## ShelfLife

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**Happy Holidays to All and To All A Goodnight!**