



# DocumentOr

Web address: <http://library.willamette.edu/digor/documentor/>

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A Newsletter of the Documents Interest Group of Oregon

Vol. 19, No. 3 (December 1999)

## Message from the Chair

Dena Hutto  
DIGOR Chair  
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It's with great pleasure that I look forward to serving as your chair during the coming year. It is a joy to be associated with the government documents librarians of Oregon, a dedicated and knowledgeable group of professionals whose members are always willing to share their experiences, their knowledge of government resources and collection management, and of course, their documents!

We've seen sweeping changes in documents librarianship during the past decade. Most of our libraries routinely catalog documents, check in government serials, maintain web pages for government information, and share reference service and instruction responsibilities for our collections with other subject specialists. The availability of so much government information on the Internet allows non-depository libraries to provide government information to their patrons, as well. These changes have had the very welcome effect of bringing new people, new expertise, and fresh perspectives to documents librarianship.

DIGOR is nearing its twentieth year as a vital organization for documents librarians in Oregon, but this is only our third year as a round table of the Oregon Library Association. Wouldn't it be wonderful if all of those folks with new expertise and fresh perspectives could celebrate DIGOR's twentieth anniversary with us? I would like to encourage our current members to find time to talk about DIGOR, its activities, and its opportunities with all of their colleagues who work with government information. DIGOR has the potential to become a broad-based interest group with something to offer to many kinds of information professionals. During the coming year, let's realize that potential.

To readers who are not familiar with DIGOR, please consider joining us for a meeting, attending our upcoming preconference program, subscribing to the DIGOR listserv, or just stopping by our web site. We have so much to learn from each other - and that's what

DIGOR is all about. Here are some of the issues, activities and initiatives we'll be discussing in the coming months:

- An OLA preconference on the 2000 Census.
- Development of the Oregon Government Information Locator Service (GILS).
- A guide to notable state and local government resources in Oregon.
- Current cataloging and retrospective conversion of uncataloged government documents collections.

... and if you have other ideas for programs, meeting topics, or projects, please contact me or any of the other DIGOR officers.

Before I close, I would like to extend a special thanks to Arlene Weible for her leadership as chair of DIGOR during the past year and for her continuing service as co-editor of the DocumentOr and DIGOR webmaster. Arlene is wonderfully knowledgeable about documents issues and librarianship, unfailingly enthusiastic, and one of the hardest-working librarians I know. Thank you, Arlene, for all of your contributions to DIGOR!

## NEXT DIGOR MEETING

January 28, 2000  
Oregon State Library  
Room 201  
250 Winter St. NE  
Salem, Oregon

### Agenda

11:00 am - Business Meeting  
1:00 pm - Lunch  
2:00 pm - Program: Tour of the Library

For directions please go to  
<http://www.osl.state.or.us/oslhome.html> and click on  
"Directions to the Library". Due to construction please use  
the east entrance.

**Contacts:** Susan Westin (susan.b.westin@state.or.us or  
503.378.4277 x236) for info about OSL.

**Dena Hutto** (dena.hutto@reed.edu or 503.777.7572) to submit agenda items for business meeting.

# LIBRARY PROFILE

## Oregon State Library

By  
**Susan Westin**  
 Email: [Susan.B.Westin@state.or.us](mailto:Susan.B.Westin@state.or.us)

The Oregon State Library became a federal depository library in the 1900's and the State of Oregon Documents depository since 1909. The federal documents are maintained in a separate section in SuDoc classification order. The Library strives to obtain multiple copies of the Oregon federal documents. One copy of all documents (federal and State) related to Oregon is housed in Special Collections.

Approximately 20% of the federal documents are cataloged in the online catalog, while approximately 75% of the state documents. At the present time the Oregon State Library is busy weeding the federal documents collection. Right now the weeding project is concentrating on duplicates, superseded items, and out-of-state materials. We are keeping materials that encompass the five state area (CA, ID, NV, OR, and WA).

### Highlights of the Oregon State Library collection:

- Annals of Congress, Congressional Globe, and Congressional Record, 1789 - date
- War of the Rebellion – Official records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 1887
- Catalog of Public Documents, which turns into the Monthly Catalog, 1774 - date
- United States Statues at Large, 1789 - date
- Serial Set, 1789 - date
- Federal Register, 1936 - date
- Census materials, 1890 - date
- Statistical Abstract, 1907 - date

The federal documents are located in the basement of the State Library building. Susan Westin is the contact person for Federal Documents and can be contacted at (503) 378-4277 x236

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## Electronic Resources Review

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### Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/>

By  
 Fred Reenstjerna  
 Douglas County Library System  
 Email: [frreenst@co.douglas.or.us](mailto:frreenst@co.douglas.or.us)

This is the GPO website for children in grades kindergarten through 12. As "the educational component of *GPO Access*," Ben's Guide is a good example for web designers interested in effective communication. It is particularly useful for librarians serving school students, and should be recommended to teacher-education programs in academic libraries. The pages in this website include State as well as Federal information, particularly citizenship-related topics such as very good explanations of separation of powers, Federalism, and links to the national high-school debate topic.

The website is named for Ben Franklin, and a cartoon (Disney<sup>tm</sup>-style) Ben Franklin figure appears on each page (rather like that Office Assistant figure in Microsoft Word<sup>tm</sup> - except Ben doesn't move). Ben is shown on the home page flying a kite, and each section of the kite is labeled for a different grade range (K-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12). While the cartoon approach probably wouldn't appeal to high-school students, its design consistency makes the site easy to navigate. Clicking on a kite section takes you to a page displaying section headings - "Symbols of Our Government", "National and State Government", "Careers", etc. - as captions on a chalkboard. Each section heading is a link to pages on the site dealing with that subject. One of the links is to other Federal agencies' children's sites, arranged by subject. A toolbox graphic is the link to a special Parents' and Teachers' section.

Ben's Guide doesn't use the "many doors/one room" style of links, where seemingly different links all lead to the same information. The writers of this site's content prepared age-appropriate sections for each grade level. For example, choosing 'Symbols of our Government' on the K-2 page leads to a page that references the National Anthem. The description of the National Anthem from this page includes words to the 1<sup>st</sup> verse. From Grades 3-5 and higher, the link is to a page that includes all verses of National Anthem. And,

the text on the K-3 links is written in a larger type size than text on higher-grade links. This shows an attention to detail and to readability that is exemplary in web design.

A strength of Ben's Guide is that each section contains links to children's pages arranged by subject/department [Agriculture, Arts & Recreation, Careers, Crime and Justice, etc.]. These links are a great way to get to children-oriented pages from the Agriculture Department, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and other agencies for which you might never imagine that children's pages existed. They are the same regardless of grade range, but they are outside the domain of Ben's Guide. Whenever you choose this link from within Ben's Guide, the Franklin character appears on a screen saying that you are now leaving the Guide and going elsewhere. It's a nice navigational touch, although the message doesn't say that you can use the 'Back' button on your browser to return to Ben.

The weakest portion of Ben's Guide is the section for parents and teachers. That section doesn't contain any 'About this site' information that would explain how useful Ben's Guide could be to support curricula or to answer homework questions. This section has limited subject access, and only to documents for purchase. The parent/teacher page does refer to subject bibliographies and to the CIC (Consumer Information Center) catalog as links, and illustrations provide subject links to broad topics such as drugs, careers and college, foreign language. However, the number of entries behind each of these graphical categories is miniscule - ranging from 31 publications for sale in 'Careers and College' to 1 in 'Foreign languages' and 1 in 'Computers and the Internet'. Generally, these links aren't worth the effort of either the user or the website manager, because their graphics promise more document access than they deliver.

As a Reference Desk veteran, I appreciate the State information in Ben's Guide. The site itself has prepared original summaries for each State, including such favorites as names of the State Song, Flower, Bird, etc. - all those facts that send one running for an almanac. The listing for Oregon had an accurate description of the origin of the State's name. These summary pages in Ben's Guide include links to the official State website, as well as to *Congressional Directory* email addresses for one's Representatives and Senators. A pictorial directory is available with Adobe Acrobat<sup>tm</sup>.

In sum, Ben's Guide is a well-designed children's website with age-appropriate information, but it could be useful for reference questions as well.

### Minutes of the last DIGOR Meeting

September 10, 1999  
Eastern Oregon University  
La Grande, Oregon

Submitted by:  
Carrie Ottow  
DIGOR Vice Chair/Chair Elect

#### Present

Craig Smith, Susan Westin, Michael Thommen, Carrie Ottow, Arlene Weible, Debra Spidal, Dena Hutto.

#### Welcome and introductions

The meeting was called to order at 11:00

Shirley Roberts, Assistant Director of the EOU library welcomed us to La Grande.

The agenda was approved.

#### Reports

**State Library** - Craig Smith introduced Susan Westin, the new Documents librarian at the State Library. He also reported on the building construction in Salem. The Reference room is closed and Craig suggested people should call first before coming. They are still working on weeding the Dewey collection. The SuDoc collection will be next. Weeded docs will be offered to PSU first, then to Valley Link libraries.

Susan Westin reported on the GILS project at the State Library. They are currently looking at search engine software, including Compass, Ultraseek and Microsoft's Site Server.

**Membership and Budget Report** - Arlene reported that membership is about 30. DIGOR's balance is 503.27 as of July 31. \$300 was paid as an honorarium for George Wasson, the speaker at the last OLA conference program, and \$50 was spent for gift certificate for Gwen.

Craig mentioned that the bibliography done on Oregon authors was successful, and maybe we should do a bibliography on notable state and local documents to raise money.

**ORBIS Government Documents Task Force** - Dena reported that the GDTF made recommendations on representing Documents more fully in the ORBIS database. The Task Force has also asked for another year to flesh out and work on the recommendations. They are currently waiting for the Council to meet and accept the report before going any further.

### Old Business

**Preconference on the Census (budget and logistical considerations)** - The preconference is set for April 5th and will be cosponsored by ACRL OR. The proposal is due at the end of the month. We will need a brief description of the program including outcome statement and indicating the target audience. We need to decide if it should be a half day or full day and how much to charge.

The group decided on a the title "Census 101," and a charge of between \$30 and \$40. Arlene will talk more with ACRL about splitting costs and profits. The group also decided it would be best to cap attendance at 50 people.

### New Business

**Election of new secretary for 1999/2000** - Lisa Rowilson has left Lewis and Clark college for a new job in Monterey, CA and so is unable to finish out her term as DIGOR secretary. The Executive Board nominated Valery King of OSU and she was elected to fill out Lisa's term.

Arlene announced that she would welcome help with the Documentor. Anyone with ideas for articles or contributors should contact her.

The idea was brought up of distributing the Documentor in the depository boxes with a colored flyer advertising the pre-conference.

**Winter meeting place and program** - The State Library Staff offered to host the Winter meeting in their new conference room. The topic decided upon was Oregon GILS. The date was set for Jan. 28th.

The business meeting adjourned at 11:55 for lunch.

### Afternoon Program

The afternoon program consisted of a discussion session on content and format of the Census preconference.

Content considered included the Economic Census, Agricultural Census, Historic Census material and GIS.

Suggestions for handouts included: freebies from the Census Bureau, handouts from GODORT exchange, lists of best reference books and web sites for Census information.

The group also considered having the preconference off site in a hands-on lab setting.

Possible speakers considered were Micheal Lavin, author of Understanding the Census, George Hough, of the Oregon State Data Center.

#### 1999-2000 DIGOR Officers

**Chair:** Dena Hutto, Reed College  
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