



# The OPLIN CIRCUIT

News for Ohio Public Library Staff & Management

## Ohio Libraries Dazzle

Ohio's public libraries continue to amaze. Even in the midst of budget struggles, services to Ohio residents continue without interruption, and they're even expanding.

Last September, **KnowItNow** took reference services out to where the consumers are—on the World Wide Web—and are now providing service to them 24 hours a day. KnowItNow librarians have answered almost **10,000 information request per month** ever since. The State Library of Ohio, Cleveland Public Library, Cuyahoga County Public Library, and the NOLA Regional Library System are to be commended for bringing this service statewide.

### What is OPLIN doing to help?

- Staying in touch with the KnowItNow

providers. It's vital that Ohio has a core set of databases available to every resident from every public library. The KnowItNow After Dark team relies almost entirely on electronic content, and have been an invaluable source for identifying what should be in Ohio's core electronic resource collection.

- Making sure that the electronic resources we own work properly in KnowItNow. The interface has presented some challenges, and we are working through them case-by-case. We have to make sure that the KnowItNow providers can use the database content OPLIN has, and that they can also push this content to their patrons.
- Expanding our reach. Some providers, such as the Ohio Capital Connection, have been reluctant to provide remote access to Ohio library patrons. OPLIN has been demonstrating "the third case"—KnowItNow—and arguing that KnowItNow patrons are virtually "inside" an Ohio public library. While some vendors will still not permit remote access on demand, they may allow remote access delivered by a librarian.
- Making sure we can reliably count what we use. Our remote access, in-library and KnowItNow usage of OPLIN databases can all be accounted for.

So take a moment and give yourself a pat on the back. Now, back to work. There are patrons waiting.

## Budget Update

As this newsletter goes to press, everyone in the library community

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## Lost, But Found

**Bobbi Galvin** realized she wanted to work for the State Library when she was very young and sat in the audience while former children's librarian Floyd Dickman read her and her friends a few stories.

Dickman's storytelling was amazing, and since she had only known women librarians up until that point, Bobbi was left with the impression that the State Library was a pretty progressive place.

When Bobbi was 15 and a library page, she had the opportunity to tell Floyd that she was going to work with him at the State Library someday. She's sorry she arrived a little too late.

Bobbi started in the OPLIN Support Center in early February, although she

isn't really sure how she found the place (she has a lousy sense of direction). Miraculously, she and her three children moved across the state from Ada and found a new home in Lithopolis, just southeast of Columbus. They didn't think there could be a village even smaller than the one they came from, but somehow they found it... and it already feels like home.

Bobbi says, "The job is fantastic - librarians are great people to work with. Even after twenty years in the library field, I still find Ohio public libraries to be very exciting!"

In finding a job that combines technology and libraries, she certainly seems to have found her niche.



### Budget Update: continued from page 1

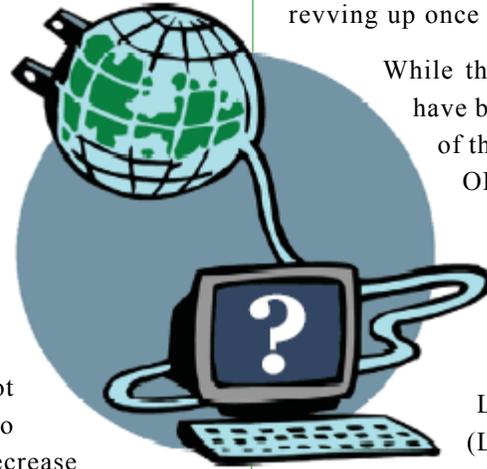
is acutely aware that the Governor's proposed budget is before the Ohio House of Representatives, and that it has a number of items that may impact public libraries.

How is OPLIN faring? The answer is fairly well, which in troubled fiscal times is pretty good. As currently proposed, the budget includes a 10% cut in OPLIN's General Revenue funding (GRF). That's the money actually appropriated by the State of Ohio to OPLIN. This cut comes on top of a 6% cut last July 1st. OPLIN relies on GRF for monthly telecommunications operations and all subscription commitments, plus support and administrative costs. This year for the first time, GRF was insufficient to cover our commitments.

The proposed budget also includes an increase in our spending authority over other funds, if any. "Spending authority" enables the State Library, as OPLIN's fiscal agent, to receive and expend funds received in the form of E-rate discounts,

or fees from libraries that opt to participate in group database contracts through OPLIN. Historically, E-rate has been too unreliable to use to fund operations and ongoing commitments, but it has become somewhat more consistent in recent years. We have proposed the use of E-rate refunds to meet our commitments to the Libraries Connect Ohio shared databases, as well as any network upgrades and contingencies that arise in any given year.

Bottom line, we do not believe we will have to drop a database or decrease services this year. However, we have shifted our dependence for the first time onto "soft" money. While that will work for this biennium, the impact on the future remains to be seen.



## Network Planning: Make It Wide

OPLIN has started to visit various public libraries around the state to discuss Wide Area Network (WAN) planning. The meetings have been timely, as E-rate and local contract cycles are revving up once again.

While these conversations have been fruitful for most of the libraries we visit, OPLIN would like to remind the library community that we are unable to provide services to those libraries searching for Local Area Network (LAN) consulting.

**The OPLIN Network Planning Service is limited to WAN consulting only!** For LAN consulting services, libraries should contact their Regional Library System or local network provider.

For an overview of the OPLIN WAN planning service, see the PDF brochure on the OPLIN website at [www.oplin.org/oplin/pdf/NetworkPlanningServices.pdf](http://www.oplin.org/oplin/pdf/NetworkPlanningServices.pdf) (or go to About OPLIN > FAQ || OPLIN Network Services).

OPLIN preview in order to present opportunities to libraries that wish to add optional titles, or whose communities expect multiple titles on some subjects. OHIONET is waiving non-member fees as a requirement to participation in the database program.

Databases offered in the preview will have pricing presented by either OPLIN or OHIONET. If there is a large level of interest in a specific title, additional discounts will be negotiated by OPLIN or OHIONET where feasible. Products the vendors wish to sell directly will not be included in this trial period.

## 2005 Database Preview OPLIN & OHIONET Join Forces

OPLIN and OHIONET are joining forces this year to provide diverse content opportunities for Ohio libraries. This year, the annual database preview period will run from **April 1 to May 15**.

Right now, OPLIN is working furiously with vendors to negotiate the best pricing opportunities for all Ohio public libraries. We're focusing on providing group contracts that can be expanded to the largest number of public libraries, for products that have been identified as covering core topic areas. We do not expect that OPLIN will drop any of the titles it currently provides.

The 2005 database preview should include:

- The databases in our existing group contracts with opportunities for libraries to join or renew. These include *HeritageQuest*, *EBSCO Auto Repair Reference Center*, *EBSCO Books Index with Reviews*, *SIRS Knowledge Source*, and *eLibrary*.
- Two-to-five additional titles in areas such as business and homework support—the core set of material all libraries need.

OHIONET is a member organization that provides access to OCLC's reference products, plus the electronic resources of many publishers and vendors. While its focus has been content for academic libraries, they also serve public libraries. This year, they will participate in the



# Feeling Secure

When OPLIN looked at needed improvements in our support services, it became clear that one area towered above all others—network security support. We also found that we had more questions than answers, like:

- What is the state of security on the OPLIN wide area network?
- What is the state of security at the majority of libraries connected to the OPLIN WAN?
- What security services do they need?
- What should OPLIN require of all libraries vis-à-vis security?
- What support would they need in order to manage what OPLIN might require?
- What advanced or optional security services should OPLIN offer?
- Should OPLIN provide these services for

free, or should libraries that choose to use them pay for them?

In September, OPLIN issued an RFQ to begin to define the services libraries might need, and to help us answer those questions. We're seeking nothing less than a total audit of the WAN and its end-points at the libraries. Also, we expect to do a de-tailed server device-level security audit of 10% of the libraries.

At their February 11th meeting, the OPLIN Board approved the proposal of Infiniti Systems Group of Brecksville to do this work. We are currently completing the contracting process and will have announcements this spring. Results will be shared with the library community in the next issue of *The Circuit* and at Tech Connections 6 in June.

## Old Equipment Be Gone!

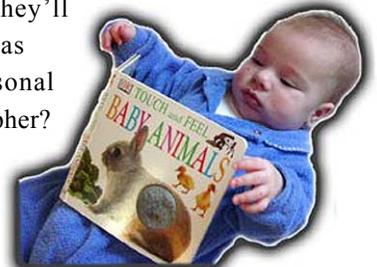
Those of you who have OPLIN-provided workstations that are no longer in use and wish to return them to state surplus can send the equipment back to OPLIN.

The next equipment return window is **March 14-28, 2005**. For instructions on how to return equipment, see the **FAQ || Equipment Returns** area of the OPLIN website (under **About OPLIN > Frequently Asked Questions**), or e-mail the OPLIN Support Center ([support@oplin.org](mailto:support@oplin.org)).

## Famous Readers

Ohio public library patrons are the rotating stars of the OPLIN website (take a look under the Featured Database box), and it's easy for your library's patrons to join the ranks. It's an excellent way to promote reading AND to promote your library.

So how can you get in on the action? Just snap a photo of a reading patron, get their permission, and send it on in (visit [www.oplin.org/oplin/pdf/photorelease.pdf](http://www.oplin.org/oplin/pdf/photorelease.pdf) for more detailed instructions). Who knows—maybe someday, once your patron is rich and famous, they'll hire you as their personal photographer?



*A patron of the Whetstone Branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library, made famous by his appearance on the OPLIN website. Also (coincidentally) the child of the person that edits this newsletter.*

## Out & About on the Circuit

OPLIN will be at every single one of the **OLC Chapter Conferences** this spring. Will you? The dates are as follows:

March 23	Northeast	Kent State University, Kent
March 31	Southeast	Holiday Inn, Zanesville
April 8	Southwest	Dayton Marriott
April 15	North	Clarion Hotel & Conference Center
April 22	Northwest	Toledo Hilton/Dana Conference Center
April 28	Central	Fawcett Center, Columbus

More information can be found at [www.olec.org/chap\\_confs.asp](http://www.olec.org/chap_confs.asp).

In addition, we will be at **Tech Connections 6** on June 13-14 in Columbus. More information can be found at [www.rls.lib.oh.us](http://www.rls.lib.oh.us).

In recent months, OPLIN has continued to provide training sessions for library staff in-service days (just ask Clark County PL). If you're looking for some hands-on training for your staff, OPLIN can do overviews of our databases, OneSearch, and KnowItNow. Call the OPLIN office or e-mail [yarmando@oplin.org](mailto:yarmando@oplin.org) to find out more.



# OPLIN Database News

## AccessScience

In December, AccessScience completed a **major upgrade to its search engine**. The new engine offers the following features:

- Faster search results
- Simplified organization of results
- Enhanced highlighting of search terms in results
- New search history tracker
- New spell-checker with suggested terms if an unrecognized search term is entered.

Nothing else changed in the design and functionality of AccessScience other than the search results page.

## EBSCO

*The New Republic*, long recognized as one of America's leading journals of opinion, will soon be available from EBSCO as a stand-alone database. The new full text database will be called ***The New Republic Archive***.

EBSCO has also announced the addition of a **dedicated thesaurus** to the *Communication & Mass Media Complete* database available via EBSCOhost. The new Communication Thesaurus was developed with the intent of providing benefits similar to those afforded by other highly-specialized database thesauri, such as that available within *Business Source Premier*.

## NewsBank

NewsBank recently **updated their interface** with several enhancements, making it easier than ever to locate, review and use news articles. The more intuitive interface features:

- The ability to browse by "date" and "section."
- "Quick links" on each article page for instant searches by author, page, section or date without starting a new search
- The option to search within a specific newspaper section.
- The ability to view an unlimited number of search results.
- New "Search History" and "Saved Articles" functionality.
- "Search History" and "Saved Articles" tabs have been integrated as links into the left navigation area.
- A new "Source Groups" option that allows you to create a customized group of titles.

## Encyclopædia Britannica

*Britannica Online School Edition* now provides access to **Ohio curriculum standards and benchmarks**, with links to

supporting encyclopedia articles. These articles are organized by subject and grade level.

This curriculum standard alignment helps schools using Britannica meet requirements for No Child Left Behind. Britannica achieved this alignment to standards through its partnership with EdGate, a leading provider of tools and resources that assist educators in meeting the requirements of the NCLB legislation.

Through *Britannica Online School Edition*, educators can access EdGate's **Curriculum Matrix**, the premier database for lessons, assessments, and Internet resources directly linked to each state's standards. The Curriculum Matrix uniquely prioritizes standards based on both essential skills and state achievement tests. This matrix provides an easy way to find resources that support specific standards, including *Britannica* encyclopedia articles and instructional activities, as well as an expanded collection of curriculum activities provided by EdGate.

To access the Curriculum Matrix, go to the Britannica Teacher Resources page by clicking the link in the header, or by visiting [new.school.eb.com/browse/teachers](http://new.school.eb.com/browse/teachers). Click the "Browse curriculum standards" link, select your state, then select your grade and subject, click "Find It", and your state's standards will be displayed. Click a standard to see the related materials.

## Enciclopedia Universal en Español

Britannica recently added the ***Merriam-Webster Spanish-English and English-Spanish dictionaries*** to *Enciclopedia Universal en Español*, so that students can translate between Spanish and English. This feature is available from the home page and in the header of all other pages. To use this dictionary, choose the option for "Español-Inglés", enter a word, and click the "Ir" button (Go). Please also note that the database includes a Spanish-language dictionary, to find complete word definitions in Spanish. This dictionary is called "Diccionario" or "Diccionario en Español".

## KnowItNow 24x7

Building upon the success and popularity of the KnowItNow project, NOLA Regional Library System has developed an **Internet Explorer Toolbar**. Downloaded to your workstation, the toolbar can offer quick and convenient access to all of the KnowItNow services, namely the KnowItNow Reference Service, HomeworkNow and ReadThisNow services. NOLA will also be including toolbar icons to allow users to access the OPLIN databases plus other features, including blocking pop-up ads.

This toolbar is FREE to all Ohio libraries to download and install. Go to [www.knowitnow.org](http://www.knowitnow.org) for your free download.