

# Executive Director's Annual Report

## July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011

It has been an exciting and productive year! Limited financial resources have made the past four years more than a little challenging. Though we have modified our programs and services, we have been able to sustain them all and stay true to our mission thanks to the generous support and commitment of our members, board, and staff. Thank You!

### HOW DID WE DO IT?

In the fall of 2008 the Board of Trustees adopted a strong and ambitious strategic plan, but by early 2010 it was clear that the plan needed to be modified. Our President appointed a Task Force to review the *Ohioana Quarterly* and asked the Strategic Planning Committee to work with them to develop approaches to help Ohioana operate within the limitations of its current financial and human resources.

After surveying our members and much discussion, in October 2010 the Task Force recommended that beginning in 2011 two combined issues of the *Ohioana Quarterly* would be published beginning with the Winter/Spring issue and followed by the Summer/Fall issue. The Task Force also recommended that we expand our partnership with *Ohio Magazine*. Twice annually a special expanded section in *Ohio Magazine* would be devoted to Ohioana related articles. These two issues would be mailed to all Ohioana members. The committee felt that our members would continue to receive quality service and we could expand the awareness of Ohioana to the more than 89,000 *Ohio Magazine* readers. The Board of Trustees approved both recommendations.

The Strategic Planning Committee presented five options to the Board to help align program initiatives with projected revenues. The options were:

1. Temporarily suspend Ohioana Day and Ohioana Awards except the Book Awards for 2011.
2. Publish a combined Winter/Spring issue of the *Ohioana*

*Quarterly* in the spring of 2011.

3. Organize a Financial Advisory Board.
4. Begin selecting featured authors for the Ohioana Book Festival in September 2010.
5. Schedule a benefit fundraiser for Ohioana in 2011.

The Committee also recommended the reaffirmation of Ohioana's mission and modifications to Ohioana's Strategic Plan. The Board of Trustees approved the options proposed by the Strategic Planning Committee as well as the mission statement and modified plan.

The mission of the Ohioana Library Association is to recognize and encourage the creative accomplishments of Ohioans; preserve and expand a permanent archive of books, sheet music, manuscripts, and other materials by Ohioans and about Ohio and Ohioans; and disseminate information about the work of Ohio writers, musicians, and other artists to researchers, schools, and the general public. Reaffirmed on October 15, 2011

The following report will outline our work during the year in accordance with the above actions of our Board.

### **Priority Goals:**

#### **Goal I. Assure sufficient financial and human resources to sustain Ohioana's programs.**

Although Ohioana's FY 2011 state budget allocation of \$125,000 was approved by the legislature in 2009, we entered the fiscal year with 10% of the allocation withheld and, therefore budgeted conservatively to receive \$112,500. Research by the Quarterly Task Force and Strategic Planning Committee revealed that over the past six years our state support had been reduced by 45%. During the same period our efforts had resulted in securing a 75% increase in private support. In 2005 state support of \$202,224 provided 66% of Ohioana's operating budget and 34%, \$106,045, was realized from independent support. By 2011 state support was 37% and private support was 63% of Ohioana's operating budget. Private support, much of which is designated for specific programs, now makes up nearly two-thirds of Ohioana's total income. While private

support has significantly increased it does not make up for the state funding cuts. State funding is important to Ohioana's survival.

It should be noted that in January 2011 Governor Strickland released the 10% held back from agency funds; however, Governor Kasich reinstated the withholdings until he was comfortable that state revenue would be sufficient to cover agencies full allocations. He released the 10% on March 28th. These funds, as well as a \$13,500 unrestricted grant received from Momentum 2010 for our efforts to continue the celebration and long term preservation of the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame, helped us end the fiscal year with a positive operating budget balance rather than the projected deficit.

**Objective A.** Mobilize the board, staff, members, and other supporters to advocate for Ohioana programs and the continuation of funding from the Ohio General Assembly as we work to increase income from other sources.

*Charge the Legislative Affairs Committee with developing a plan that will outline actions to be taken to assure ongoing communication with the members of the state legislature and the board, staff, and other supporters.*

Ohioana's Legislative Affairs Committee helped us develop and follow through on working with the Ohio Legislature and public officials during the election and budget process this year. Governor Kasich's Budget, released on March 15, 2011, included an allocation of \$120,000 for Ohioana in both FY 2012 and 2013. This reflected a 4% decrease over our allocations in FY 2010 and 2011. Considering the significant cuts necessary to balance the state budget we were not disappointed by this allocation. Our allocation remained unchanged during reviews by the Ohio House of Representatives, Ohio Senate, and Joint Conference Committee budget process. Our testimony with both the Ohio House of Representative's finance subcommittee on higher education and the Ohio Senate Finance Committee included an explanation of the long-time public/private partnership between the State of Ohio and Ohioana and the importance of state funding to leverage ongoing and new independent private support.

**Objective B.** Recruit board members who will be able to assist in securing new and diverse supporters and funding partners.

We welcomed new and enthusiastic board members Melissa Cain, Beth Ervin, and Michelle Gubola to Ohioana's Board. Melissa Cain is a professor in the College of Education at the University of Findlay; Beth Ervin is the Communications Director with Experience Columbus; and Michelle Gubola is an attorney with Honda of America. The Nominating Committee continues to review our needs and recruit trustees that have the interest, skills, and contacts important to sustain and move Ohioana into the future.

**Objective C.** Secure new financial and/or in-kind support from individuals and organizations with the capacity to form ongoing partnerships with Ohioana. Retain and work to increase financial and/or in-kind support of current donors and partner organizations.

The economic climate has made it difficult for individuals, foundations, corporations, and the state to contribute more to any not-for-profit organizations. We have been fortunate to retain support at some level from all of our funders. We, along with our partners, have tried to be more creative in ways to expand in-kind mutual support to each other.

*Create a Financial Advisory Board charged with developing an aggressive campaign to secure ongoing major donor support to fund operational costs for Ohioana core programs. This is a priority identified in our new plan; working on creating the committee and looking at our board structure will be a focus of our planning.*

**Objective D.** Develop and implement a legacy donors program.

Members have provided for Ohioana's future by designating support in their wills, designating Ohioana as a beneficiary of an insurance policy or retirement fund, and setting up planned gifts; however, we have not developed the program as fully as we should. In recent years, the economy has forced us to concentrate on maintaining solvency. We encourage anyone who has provided a legacy gift for Ohioana to let us know so that you can help us develop our legacy program. We can work

with you now to recognize your interest and commitment to Ohioana.

**Objective E.** Provide sufficient resources to retain and attract personnel with the skills needed to implement Ohioana's programs.

Ohioana's staff positions have been reduced through attrition during the past four years; this year our staffing numbers remained the same. We were sorry to see library associate Kristin Krumsee leave in January to accept a full-time position at an academic library. In April, we welcomed Jennifer Johnson, an Ohio State University graduate and Kent State University MLIS graduate who joined the staff to fill the library associate position.

Our staff includes a full-time Program Coordinator, Development Director, and Executive Director, and a part-time Library Associate. We no longer have a full-time Librarian and Library Assistant, so all job responsibilities have been revised to fill the gaps.

We are fortunate to have staff members who are dedicated to Ohioana's mission and have been willing to take on more responsibilities without any salary increases for four years.

**Goal II. Continue and enhance the core programs. The core programs are collection development and reference; educational outreach; and public programming.**

**Objective A.** Assess the effectiveness of each core program and its contribution in fulfilling Ohioana's mission.

For many years we described our programs as: the Ohioana Collection, Ohioana Awards, and the *Ohioana Quarterly*. As the Strategic Planning Committee assessed all of our programs during 2009 and 2010 we realized that our services needed to be realigned and classified in new more encompassing categories as listed in Goal II.

The **collection development and reference program** includes the growth and use of the Ohioana Collection. The collection is made up of more than 45,000 books written by Ohioans or about Ohio or Ohioans; 25,000 biographical files on Ohio writers, musician, artists, and others of note, includ-

ing the nearly 400 members of the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame; approximately 10,000 pieces of sheet music; and many scrapbooks and other ephemera. It is from the collection that all of our other services evolve and it is the legacy we leave for future.

The development of the collection involves continued research to find and request new books that qualify for the collection. During FY 2011 Ohioana received 693 books, of these 452 were added to the collection and 241 were received as review copies. All books were donated by publishers, authors, or friends of Ohioana. The value of the donations was \$11,715.34; the value of those added to the collection was \$7,811.33 and the review copies value was \$3,904.01.

Researchers of all ages and interests have used the collection in-house. Researchers have included elementary school students working on class projects, graduate students seeking material for their dissertations, authors discovering information for books and articles, genealogists researching family and community histories, and readers just wanting to enjoy an out-of-print book or skim a new book before deciding to make a purchase. Many specific reference questions were received and answered via phone conversations and email exchanges.

Items from the collection were also used for displays at the State Library of Ohio, the Ohio Statehouse, and in our Martha Kinney Cooper Reading Room.

It should be noted that we have not been electronically cataloging books since FY 2009 because we cannot afford the full OCLC membership fee nor do we have the staff to process new books for cataloging. All new additions to the collection are accessioned and can be found in the "books received" section of the *Ohioana Quarterly*. This section of the *Quarterly* is also posted on our website.

**Ohioana's educational outreach program** includes the *Ohioana Quarterly*, the Ohio Literary Map, Ohioana's website, and cooperative programs with other organizations.

The Fall 2010 *Ohioana Quarterly*, which included information about the 2010 Ohioana Award winners and our annual report, was distributed as usual in September 2010. Sub-

scribers were notified in early January 2011 of the change in the publishing schedule for 2011. The first combined issue of the *Quarterly*, Winter 2010/Spring 2011, was mailed in early April 2011. All members and subscribers received the May issue of Ohio Magazine. The Summer/Fall 2011 issue will be mailed to members in September and members will receive the October issue of *Ohio Magazine*.

We appreciate the contributions of many volunteer reviewers that have helped readers learn more about new books by Ohio authors and books about Ohio and Ohioans. We recognize the outstanding work of Beth Poley who has had the layout and editing of the Ohioana Quarterly added to her job description as Program Coordinator.

The Ohio Literary Map, a cooperative project between the Ohio Center for the Book, the State Library of Ohio, and Ohioana, continues to be a resource for students and teachers of all ages and educational levels.

Several years ago, with a grant from Honda of America, the “Ohioana Travels the Underground Railroad” educational program was created and designed for hardcopy distribution. Unfortunately, soon after it was developed we lost our educational outreach staff person and we were never able to promote the program as we had planned. During the summer and fall Beth Poley updated the materials and formatted the information so that all of the teachers’ resources could be downloaded from our website. Immediately after the first of the year the Ohio Department of Education was notified and asked to share the information with teachers around the state. Public libraries and our members and friends were also notified and ask to help spread the word about the new educational resources we have available. This program, along with other educational resources, is heavily used by individuals and groups across Ohio, as well as throughout the United States and around the world.

The general Ohioana website was visited 20,318 times by 18,413 new visitors and 1,905 return visitors. Forty-six percent of the visitors were from Ohio, but visits originated from 104 countries including all fifty states in the USA. Visitors viewed 46,796 pages on this website. Full year statistics were not available for the Ohioana Book Festival site, but between January

19th and June 30th, the site was visited 4,960 times by 4,103 new visitors and 857 return visitors, who visited 11,931 pages. Combine our records indicate that more than 25,278 visitors viewed more than 58,747 pages on Ohioana's websites. We thank Gretchen McBeath who has served as our volunteer webmaster for more that eight years!

During the year, Ohioana worked with numerous other organizations to provide educational outreach programs including Kent State University School of Library and Information Science, the State Library of Ohio, the Ohio Statehouse, Ohio Center for the Book, and the Scioto Juvenile Correctional Institution, among many others.

Ohioana has also served as a training ground for college interns. For the first time in several years we were able to offer the Ruth Mount Internship. Sarah Minor started as a volunteer and was then selected as the 2011 Ruth Mount Intern. Although Sarah helped Ohioana in many ways, her paid internship emphasis was assisting with the Ohioana Book Festival.

**Ohioana's Public programming**, which promotes reading and writing, includes the Ohioana Book Festival: Celebrating Ohio's Authors, the annual Ohioana literary awards to recognize and encourage Ohio writers of all ages, and other programs to bring together readers and writers.

The Ohioana Awards, presented during the Ohioana Awards Weekend, October 15th & 16th, 2010 was the highlight of the fall. Sixteen individuals were recognized for their accomplishment as writers, musicians, artists, and for their outstanding books published the previous year. The new format we adopted in 2009 included a Friday evening reception which was enjoyed by members, guest, and the award winners. We appreciate the involvement of First Lady Frances Strickland at the event and her gracious congratulations to our award winners. Student musicians from Fort Hayes Vocational Music Program added ambience to the evening. We thank Linda Feagler, who did an excellent job of moderating the panel discussion with our book and children's literature award winners. The program ended with a special treat; Jorma Kaukonen, our Music Citation recipient and Rock & Roll Hall of Fame member, played his guitar, sharing an original song.

The annual Ohioana Day luncheon, held in the Ohio Statehouse Atrium, was enjoyed by everyone who attended. To extend the celebration to those that could not be with us, Ohio Government TV taped the awards presentation and made it available to the public via podcast. The Statehouse Museum Shop provided copies of the award winners' books for sale, which was appreciated by not just the award winning authors but all who attended. Our partnership with the Museum Shop has proven to be beneficial to us both.

The selection process for the 2011 Ohioana Book Awards began in January, as volunteers from around the state working on book award screening committees began reviewing the more than 600 books that were eligible for Ohioana Book Awards. In mid-April the screening committees announced the twenty-six 2011 Ohioana Book Award finalists. We thank Margaret Simon, Communications Director at the Shaker Heights Public Library, for designing a brochure announcing the 2011 Ohioana Book Award finalists. The brochure was made available in an electronic format to all public libraries and hardcopies were distributed at the Ohioana Book Festival. We thank the libraries, organizations, and media that helped not only to promote Ohio authors and their work, but also offered readers great additions to their "books to read" list.

The seven volunteer members of our final selection committee read each book and ranked their choices in each category. The Book Awards Committee chair Georgeanne Bradford submitted the committee's recommendations to our board in early June. The Board of Trustees approved the recommendations by June 15th. The winners of the 2011 Ohioana Book Award are announced in this issue of the *Quarterly*.

The fifth annual Ohioana Book Festival was made possible with the support of seven sponsors, three media sponsors, five contributors, nineteen partners, and nearly a hundred volunteers. The main event of the Ohioana Book Festival was held on Saturday, May 7th at Fort Hayes Metropolitan Education Center with almost one hundred authors involved. The day included the opening, fifteen panel discussions, ten readings and conversations with featured authors, readings by fifty-three fair authors, book appraisals done by the Aldus Society, and activi-

ties for children conducted by Kent State University School of Library and Information Science students and faculty. Barnes & Noble served as the official bookseller for the Festival. Once again, Candice Watkins served as our logistics coordinator.

Prior to the main event, the featured authors took part in sixteen different outreach programs beginning on April 29th. The outreach venues included radio and TV appearances, a reception at the McConnell Arts Center, programs at several public libraries and schools, a special program at Nationwide Children's Hospital, and book signings at the Barnes & Noble Lennox Town Center location.

This was the first time the Festival has been held at Fort Hayes Metropolitan Education Center. The new space worked very well, with ample facilities and parking. It is close to the freeway and the COTA bus line. The campus and facilities at Fort Hayes will allow the Festival to grow in coming years. Even with the move to a new location the Festival did very well. Attendance on May 7th was estimated at 3,750 people versus 3,650 in 2010. With outreach and media activities included, the 2011 Ohioana Book Festival reached a total estimated audience of nearly 50,000.

The Festival closed Saturday evening with a special reception at the Ohio Governor's Residence hosted by First Lady Karen Kasich.

For more than fifty years the Hamilton County Ohioana committee has sponsored a public program to recognize local authors who have recently published books. The first Ohioana Authors' Tea was held in the home of our founder Martha Kinney Cooper. We are grateful to the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library that has supported our Hamilton County Authors events. This year the event was held on March 27th and nationally known Cincinnati illustrator Will Hillenbrand receive the annual Cooper Award.

*Increase the profitability of programs and services when feasible to generate increased income.*

For several years Ohioana had partnered with the Life-long Learning Institute (LLI) to sponsor a book club for its members. During the transition of LLI we have continued to

sponsor the book club and last year jointly expanded the book discussions to a larger audience. With the help of members of the group, this year we sponsored two author book discussions. On February 16th author P.L. Gaus joined the group to discuss his book *Blood of the Prodigal*, and on May 6th author Ted Gup joined the group to discuss his book *The Secret Gift*. Books were sold and donations were requested to defray the direct expenses of the events and help cover some of the indirect costs for Ohioana. These events, and similar ones in the future, will not raise major funds for Ohioana, but they will cover their own expenses and may expand the awareness of Ohioana.

An ongoing book sale of unused review copies or donated books has generated small amounts for Ohioana, but we must constantly be working on new ways to expand our income.

**Objective B.** Coordinate existing volunteers and develop an ongoing program of recruitment and retention of new volunteers.

We are grateful for the support of many volunteers, from Cathy Tilling and Jerri Lawrence who regularly come to Ohioana to work on special projects, to student volunteers who have helped with many projects, to members and their friends. There are also our volunteer book reviewers, various committee volunteers, and the more than one hundred volunteers who have helped with our various public events. We do our best to coordinate their efforts and express our appreciation; however, sometimes in the rush of the moment, our acknowledgement of their gift of time and talent might fall short.

**Goal III. Expand awareness of Ohioana and its programs and resources.**

**Objective A.** Develop and implement a marketing and communications plan for Ohio and nationally.

A few years ago, graduate students at the Ohio State University's Fisher College of Business did a marketing study for us, which was then followed up with a marketing plan developed by another group of graduate students. Their findings and recommendations have helped us focus our efforts in evaluating and developing new programs. We've done our best to

promote our programs to their intended audiences and the general public. In the coming year, with the help of a marketing strategy and media relations professional, a new plan will be developed and implemented.

**Objective B.** Use internet communication technologies to expand the accessibility of Ohioana programs.

Beyond our own websites we also have Facebook and Twitter presences, which have been managed and monitored by our younger staff; Beth Poley, Kristin Krumsee, and Jen Johnson. Word about our programs, especially the Ohioana Book Festival, has been promoted by us, our partners, and authors using social media outlets.

*Change the design platform of the Ohioana website to promote visibility for the organization, enhanced accessibility for users, and direct entry of information by staff, is a priority identified in our plan. As resources become available, this can be accomplished.*

**Objective C.** Expand the number of individual and organization members to reflect the population and geographic diversity of Ohio.

**Objective D.** Retain and expand partnerships with media and cultural organizations.

During the past year Ohioana has partnered with more than forty-seven different organizations, including media and cultural organizations.

We have been successful in retaining and expanding our partnerships with media and cultural organizations as we find programs that are beneficial to both organizations and can extend services to our members and the general public. Our extended partnership with *Ohio Magazine* is a win-win for everyone. VOICECorps joined us as a partner for the 2011 Ohioana Book Festival; their involvement with the Festival extended our outreach to their clients who otherwise might not have access to the benefits of the Festival.

Each year brings challenges and rewards for all of us at Ohioana. Even with our small staff and limited resources we have accomplished much this year. Needless to say, hundreds of

people have contributed to Ohioana's success. A few have been mentioned for their special efforts, and many others should be recognized if space would allow. A few more must also be acknowledged for their exceptional efforts: our president, Cindy Puckett, and all of the devoted members of our Board of Trustees and staff. The challenges this year, as in past years, have demanded much of them, and each has given generously of his or her time, talent, expertise, and resources. We also appreciate the direct and indirect support of their families and employers. I thank them for their constant dedication. Our staff has always been small and, in the past two years, smaller than it has been in almost twenty years. Our current staff, David Weaver, Beth Poley, Jen Johnson, and I are dedicated to doing as much as we can for Ohioana, Ohio authors, Ohio libraries, and you. As in years past, I continue to challenge anyone to find a more dedicated, committed, and harder working group of individuals, or any organization that does more with less.

It has been an honor to serve as Ohioana's executive director for another year. It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to meet and work with many groups and individuals who share a vision to make Ohio a place where creativity is fostered, recognized, and preserved. I am grateful for the support, commitment, and enthusiasm of our board, staff, volunteers, members and friends, the Ohio Legislature, Ohio Governors Ted Strickland and John Kasich, and Ohio First Ladies Frances Strickland and Karen Kasich. Thank you all!

I look forward to the new challenges and opportunities that the coming year will bring to Ohioana.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda R. Hengst". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'L' and 'H'.

Linda R. Hengst  
Executive Director