

Date: 7 March 2006
Site: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Library
Staff: Cheryl Bodan, Librarian

Site Visit Summary

History & Overview

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Library has been part of PennDOT since 1979. The department is organized into deputates, and the library was formerly under the Administrative deputate. In the latest reorganization, Cheryl Bodan was aware that they might be taken on by Human Resources, however she didn't feel that it was the best place for the library at this time, so she looked for another deputate to take the library - one that would offer the most support and the best fit in the agency. The result is that the library is now under the direction of Research and Planning, a move Cheryl is pleased with.

Recently, the PennDOT library took over the LTAP collection. The contract was held by Penn State University, and is now handled by a consultant in partnership with PennDOT. After significant weeding, the LTAP collection contains about 150 videos. The LTAP guidelines stipulate that the collection may not be mixed with PennDOT library materials due to LTAP's mission to provide materials for LTAP customers first, as materials are purchased from their own budget. The collection was housed in Harrisburg in a building owned by Penn State before moving it to PennDOT.

Cheryl is happy to report that after a protracted period of negotiation between Sirsi and the PennDOT legal offices, a signed contract is imminent for their new Sirsi Unicorn OPAC and integrated library system. A large retrospective conversion project with Electronic Scriptorium was completed in Fall, 2003. 14,000 items were converted, and another 7,000 still need recon. Only the video collection remains cataloged a local system rather than MARC format. These are the only records that won't migrate to the new system immediately when Unicorn is instituted and OCLC batch loads all of PennDOT's holdings into WorldCat and TLCat. The new system is going to help Cheryl streamline her workflow, which will help tremendously as she is now a solo librarian since Dustin Brinton-Wilson left PennDOT about a month ago. Cheryl hopes to get an MLS student intern from Drexel University to assist with cataloging and other library operations.

Staff

Cheryl Bodan, Librarian

Cheryl has been at PennDOT for six years. Previously, she was the librarian for the Pennsylvania Game Commission, a position she held for twelve years. Before her career with the state of Pennsylvania, Cheryl worked in school and public libraries over the years. She has her bachelor's in Library Science from Millersville State University. Cheryl is now a solo librarian since the departure of the other full-time librarian. She believes the agency will not fill the position in the near future, and intends to hire a graduate student from the library school at Drexel University. It would be a great opportunity for a student to learn about working in a special library, where a very small staff or solo librarianship is often the norm and provides the opportunity to develop a wider array of skills.

Physical Space

The PennDOT library is located in the agency's headquarters in downtown Harrisburg. The library was moved to a new location in November, 2005 from the 5th to the 6th floor and the transition reduced the size of the library by half. They lost 30 feet of shelving, a reading area, the book return, and a magazine rack that attracted a lot of traffic in the library. The library now stores about 500 items off-site. One televisions and one PC were saved (they used to have two of each), although Cheryl hasn't set them up for use yet. The librarians' workspaces were visible and accessible to customers in the former location, more so than in the new space. The library was frequently used for informal meetings and collaborative gatherings of DOT staff, as there were tables and plenty of space to do so. Presently, there are two work areas for staff and compact shelving for the collection.

Collection & Services

18,000 Monographs
230 Active Serial titles
2000 Videos
100 CD-ROMs

The serials collection at PennDOT is quite diverse, The collection serves the PennDOT workforce with, as Cheryl says, "everything from *Concrete International* to *Working Mother*." The extensive video collection is made up mostly of training and safety videos on VHS tape. At 2000 titles, it is the largest video collection of any state library in Pennsylvania, and the collection is continually circulating. Cheryl explained that she is still ordering the format compatible with the agency's players, as VCRs are still widely in use at this time.

PennDOT Expectations for the Pooled Fund Study

Philosophically, participation in the pooled fund study appeals to Cheryl for the cooperative aspects of building a transportation knowledge network.

Practically speaking, OCLC subscriptions are a high priority for Cheryl, and a big reason she became interested in the pooled fund. Currently, PennDOT is "piggybacking" on the state library's OCLC membership and their use is very restricted. Cheryl has decided to separate from the state library's OCLC membership, and we will be instituting WorldCat and TLCat subscriptions for PennDOT through the pooled fund. This will enable Cheryl and her intern to improve their level of cataloging and increase their holdings in OCLC, while benefiting TLCat. As a practical matter, as OCLC services are an important part of pooled fund participation, Cheryl wanted to provide a push for PennDOT to approve the contracts in a timely fashion. A previous attempt to secure a contract with OCLC fizzled out over minor wording of the terms in the contract, and efforts were abandoned after two years. Cheryl is certain these circumstances are no longer in effect at PennDOT and is looking forward to becoming fully operational with OCLC.

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