

Memorial: Shelley Kay Clement (1961–2006)*

¶1 Shelly Clement was one of the most dedicated librarians I have ever known. After earning a bachelor's degree in anthropology, Shelly pursued her MLS degree at the University of Oklahoma. She joined the University of Oklahoma Law Library staff as circulation librarian in 1988. Before becoming a law librarian, Shelly worked in the Oklahoma University Libraries system from 1981 to 1988. In 1993, Shelly transferred from circulation to technical services to become the acquisitions and government documents librarian.

¶2 Shelly loved libraries. She started working in them during the sixth grade. Her gift for precision and detail served her well in her acquisitions work. She wrote detailed policies and procedures for use by her staff and others. Every fine point was covered in her reports. Her aptitude for computers was very helpful when the library migrated to a new integrated library system in 1999. Shelly poured over training manuals and online help screens to decipher the new system with all of its bells, whistles, and idiosyncracies.

¶3 Interruptions were always greeted with a welcoming nod to the interrupter. Needless to say, acquisitions interfaces with everyone—library director, technical services librarian, catalog librarian, public services librarians, and, of course, faculty and students. Shelly was always ready to help and to go the extra mile to be helpful. She was a very persistent searcher and ferreted out information on where to find things and who to order from. She never really stopped looking, even when searches seemed hopeless.

¶4 Government documents librarianship was a special passion for Shelly. She was utterly committed to the mission of the Federal Depository Library Program to provide free government information to the public. The Government Documents Roundtable of the Oklahoma Law Library Association memorialized her in a proclamation, stating “Shelly Clement was a believer in and advocate for federal depository librarianship in meeting the information needs of the people of this state [Oklahoma] and nation.”

¶5 Shelly was a member of AALL, the Southwestern Association of Law Libraries, and the Mid-America Association of Law Libraries. She took professional educational opportunities very seriously. She also was interested in management literature and putting management principles into action.

¶6 In her personal life, Shelly enjoyed cooking, collecting cookbooks, and watching educational programming on television. She loved programs about history. She also was interested in programs about renovating houses. A major accomplishment was her purchase of a “fixer-up” house. Shelly was very intuitive about how gadgets and tools work. She was undaunted by any challenging repair

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task. She also enjoyed gardening. One story often told about Shelley centered on her project to capture a baby skunk who resided under a bush in her yard. Her typical patience was engaged and ultimately she succeeded without eliciting its perfume (odeur de skunk).

¶7 Family life was very important to Shelly. She grew up in Ponca City where her parents still reside. Shelly drove home many weekends. One of her brothers and his wife live in Norman and Shelly enjoyed being an aunt to their two children. Her church was also very important to her. It is a small congregation in a small town—Noble, Oklahoma—and Shelly was close to many people and active in church leadership.

¶8 Shelly's illness was of long duration. She suffered invasive treatments as though they were minor inconveniences. She endured pain without complaint. The law library staff often forgot during the two years of her treatments that she was sick because she never complained or showed anger or frustration. She shared a lot of information to help the staff operate during her absences. Finally the gravity of her illness took hold and Shelly could no longer come to work. But she never gave up the fight against her cancer. Her spirit never flagged.

¶9 Shelly's contributions to the University of Oklahoma Law Library are significant and she will be missed. She has left a good road map which really helps us in continuing the commitment she had to growing the collection and providing good service to our patrons.—*Marilyn K. Nicely*¹

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