

**Judy Russell –  
Recognition of Service  
October 2006**



U.S. GOVERNMENT  
PRINTING OFFICE  
KEEPING AMERICA INFORMED

I am not often speechless.

This is so incredible. I am deeply, deeply touched.

Thank you all so much.

I am the one who should be thanking all of you for making these past four years such an amazing and rewarding experience.

Bruce and I frequently engage in a friendly debate about which of us has the better job (I do – but don't tell Bruce!). But we both agree that our present jobs are the best jobs we have ever had – perhaps because they are also the most challenging. I can't say that there has been a single boring day since I began as Superintendent of Documents – (though I am beginning to think that it would be nice to have one now and then just for a change of pace).

Bruce, I can't thank you enough for giving me the opportunity to serve as your Superintendent of Documents. I was honored when you asked me to join you at GPO and excited by the prospect of working closely with you to transform the Government Printing Office and improve public access to the published information of our government. These past four years have been filled with a range of activities that have resulted in positive changes for the GPO, the Federal Depository Library Program and permanent public access, exceeding my expectations for what it was possible to achieve in such a brief period of time. Thank you for your confidence in me and your support. I have learned so much from working with you. I will never forget this experience.

Our progress was only possible because of the hard work of many talented people at GPO. Ric Davis, Robin Haun-Mohamed, Laurie Hall, Ted Priebe and their incredibly hard working and capable staff in Library Services and Content Management. Kevin O'Toole, Lisa Williams, Jeff Turner and Bill Grennon and their extremely dedicated and diligent staff in Publication and Information Sales. T.C. Evans, who served as Deputy Superintendent of Document until last year. Your support has been tireless (it had to be to keep up with the pace that we have set during the past four years). Your hard work makes the trains run on time and keep us moving forward, making progress. Thank you so much. All of you.

Debbie Smith and Cindy Etkin are the two people I rely on most for direct support – and you have never let me down. You make sure I show up at the right place at the right time, with the

right speech and handouts, and that I don't have to worry about the details because I know you have. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

And, of course it is not just the people in Documents. The support from Jim Bradley and his customer service staff and Bob Schwenk and the production folks makes the content flow into our programs. They share new ideas and new opportunities and collaborate with us on innumerable projects. We couldn't operate and improve our computer systems, pay our bills, analyze our costs, or hire and train our excellent staff without the support from the CIO, the CFO and Human Capital staff. Veronica Meter and Andy Sherman help us with our very important communications with the press and with the Congress. Mike Wash and his staff (many of whom began their GPO careers in Documents) are our partners in building the Future Digital system that is so essential to our future. I could go on... There are too many people to name them all. Under Bruce's leadership, we have formed an exceptional managerial team. I am grateful to all of you for your support for me and for GPO's information dissemination programs.

Yesterday I mentioned that there were 15 individuals already serving on the Depository Library Council when I became Superintendent of Documents, and four additional classes have been appointed, including the one that began its service with this meeting. These thirty-five individuals have invested their time, energy and expertise in a dialog with GPO and with the depository community on the future roles of GPO and federal depository libraries in public access to government information. I acknowledged and thanked all the Council members yesterday, but tonight I would like to single out for a very special thank you my five Council chairmen and women: Cathy Hartmann, Dan Barkley, John Phillips, Barbie Selby and Bill Sudduth. [Please stand] Only someone who has been there would understand how hard you work and how much help you have been. Days of meetings, hours of phone calls, hundreds of e-mail messages – all to help us discuss our options, debate the issues, set a course of action, and assess our progress. You guys are great! I could not have done this job without you. Thank you so much.

My other stalwart advisors come from the library associations, both staff and members. Prue Adler from the Association for Research Libraries, Mary Alice Baish from the American Association of Law Libraries, Patrice McDermott (until recently with the American Library Association Washington Office), Doug Newcomb with the Special Libraries Association, and Lynne Siemers with the Medical Library Association. You have given generously of your time and helped me keep in touch with your members.

Ric and I and the staff have monthly conference calls with AALL leaders and with ALA and GODORT leaders to keep the lines of communication open, to consult on policy issues or operational matters, and to give us a quick and candid response to a plan or proposal before we share it more broadly with the community. Your willingness to act as a sounding board has enabled us to make rapid progress on many initiatives – and occasionally pulled us back from the edge of a cliff. Thank you.

Deanna and Lew are both wonderful colleagues and dear friends. With others from the Federal information community, we have bared our souls, shared our visions, learned from and leaned on one another, looked for opportunities to collaborate, griped (but only occasionally and with

significant provocation) and added the genuine pleasure of good conversations and pleasant dinners to ease the pressure of the myriad tasks we are juggling. I can't thank you enough for your professional support and your friendship. It has been an added benefit to serving as Superintendent of Documents.

What can I say about Martha? There were many wonderful things about my years at NCLIS, but working with and for Martha and finding a life long friend in the process is undoubtedly the best. She is an amazing and accomplished woman. I am proud to be her friend and grateful that she came all this way to be with me this evening.

Though Ridley is not here in person, I know his thoughts are with us tonight. I could hear his voice speaking even as Beth read his letter. Always candid, always insightful - and always able to make us smile even when he was challenging us to work harder to resolve a problem. We lost a great advocate for public access when Ridley retired.

Two other dear friends who are here tonight and must be acknowledged are Jim McCain and Bob Willard. Almost 30 years ago, I met Jim and then through him I met Bob. Both have remained friends and colleagues for all of these years. Both have recognized capabilities in me that I could not see in myself and both encouraged me to accept ever greater professional challenges. Thank you for your friendship and your faith in me!

And then I look out at all of you. Some of you may be meeting me for the first time at this conference, but many of you have known me for years. I have sat with you in meetings large and small, had lunch or dinner to talk over an issue or discuss an opportunity, talked on the phone and exchanged e-mails – and in some cases, all of the above.

I have visited many of your libraries. Everywhere I have been welcomed and everywhere I have shared my vision and ideas and listened to and learned about yours. You have been open to the exploration of new ways to fulfill the mission to which we are all dedicated. You have trusted me with many of your hopes for the future as well as some of your fears. Our desire to serve the public by increasing access to, and usefulness of, published Federal information has been the common bond that has brought us together. I have been blessed by, and benefited from, the dedication of this community to our common mission, which results in an enveloping camaraderie, an eagerness to collaborate, and an overwhelming generosity with your time and energy. You are truly amazing! And I am so very grateful to have had this opportunity to work with and for you.

Last, but far from least, there is my wonderful family and those friends that are so close they have become family. My father and step-mother and my oldest son are here with a few of my surrogate children and other friends to represent my entire - and entirely wonderful – extended family. Your faith in me, your unconditional love and encouragement, your patience with my crazy schedule and frequent travel, have made it possible for me to sustain my energy and keep my perspective while doing this job. I love you all.

OK, I promised myself that I would not cry, so I am going to end with a quick and funny, but true, story. Some of you may have heard this before. A few summers ago, my daughter was

taking some visiting friends sightseeing and she stopped in a local store to pick up a map, so they could see where they had been and where they were going. She pointed out all the usual important buildings and monuments – the Capitol, the Supreme Court, the White House, the museums, even our house (we happen to live on Capitol Hill just a few blocks from the Library of Congress), Union Station – and then she went to show them “where my mom works”. When she pointed to the GPO building she noticed that it was not labeled Government Printing Office. It was labeled “Superintendent of Documents.” She couldn’t wait to bring the map home to show me, saying “Oh, Mom, even the White House doesn’t say President!” A copy hangs on the wall of her room at college and when her friends ask what her mother does, she says: “There she is – right on the map!” Of course, I obtained a few extra copies and took one to Bruce and kept one for myself. (I think that proves that I really do have the better job – after all, the map doesn’t say Public Printer; it says Superintendent of Documents!)

Next year you will have a new Public Printer and a new Superintendent of Documents. Until you do – and when you do - Ric and his very capable staff are well prepared to continue our progress on the near term initiatives that are already planned or underway as well as to continue the dialog with the Council and the community to determine what else needs to be done to ensure the future of permanent public access to government information. And the rest of GPO’s capable managers and employees will support him as he supports you.

Thank you all again so very much. It has been a great honor and privilege to share these last four years with every one of you and to serve as the 22<sup>nd</sup> Superintendent of Documents.