

What Does the Green Dot Mean? Documenting Your Collection's History – Transcript of audio

Welcome back to the final session for the day. What is the green dot mean? I just want to remind everyone to please put your comments in your questions in the chat box, and after the presenters are finished with their presentation, they will address the questions and comments. With that, like to welcome Gwen Sinclair to get us started.

Hello, everyone, and thank you very much for attending our presentation this afternoon. The slides and handout are available on the conference website and as was mentioned, if you have questions, we will address those at the end of the presentation. Today, I will talk about the type of information you should collect to document the history of your depository collection or your library. Then Claudene will discuss how she organized her library's policies and procedures from scratch and share them, and then she apply that concept to the Kentucky GODORT historical documents and made them available. And finally, Angela is going to provide a case study of the Texas State Library and archives. There are many good reasons to document your library collection or organization. First, whether you're an old-timer like me who is going to retire in a few years or someone who may move to another position, you need to document the information that must be passed along to your successors. The documentation can also be used for systems analysis to understand the cataloging practices and other factors that explain oddities in the online catalog to evaluate your policies or procedures or determine whether new ones are needed. And to prepare for transitions such as a migration to a new library system or orienting a new administrator. We will mention some other reasons for creating this documentation as we go through the presentation. In terms of your library or collection history, at a minimum, you should know when your library was established and what its main purpose was which may have changed over time. For instance, many large public libraries used to have extensive research collections that have since downsized to provide more space for other functions. Document the various locations that have housed the library or collection. Has it been split up or emerged in the past? Also, have there been any disasters that affected the collection? In my case, we had a catastrophic flood in 2004 that wiped out most of our regional collections, so most of what we have now was through needs and offers. Most of us know when our depository library was established, but for some libraries, no documentation is available. I have found newspapers to be a good source of information about depository events. Has the collection been kept separate or is it integrated into the main collection? You will want to document when the library changed status. For instance, from selective to regional or regional to a shared regional. More important, you want to document why these transitions were made. To give an example, here in Hawaii, we had one public library on OWI that took over the depository collection from a public library branch because the receiving library was deemed to have more space and staff to handle the depository functions. Which classification schemes have been used in the collection and why? Your library did a study years ago and determined that it was too expensive to request the collection from SuDocs to OLC. You should also document any partnerships involving the depository. This is especially important when there is a change in depository coordinator. This is also the kind of information you would want to share with a new administrator. Don't forget to explain why the library decided to enter into the partnership and what its benefits are. It is a good idea to have documentation about your collections origins. Collections may have been inherited from other institutions, painstakingly assembled over the years by librarians, or created strictly through item selection. Find out which cooperative acquisition programs or other depository systems have contributed to the collection. This knowledge can help to explain why your library has so many superseded Army technical manuals for example. Also, what are the big online packages that have been purchased? Have you discarded print against an online database that needs to

be protected from cancellation? Documenting technical processing is something that I have been doing a lot of. You can answer questions like, why are some monograph fixers bound together and others unbound? When did we stop putting templates in pamphlet binders? Why are some posters stored flat and others folded? How much of our collection lacks depository stamps or security strips? Or of course we all need to know what those green dots mean. Libraries like mine have been through several retrospective conversion projects to create records which then went through multiple migrations from one library management system to another. Along the way, records may have gotten muddled or you may have ended up with duplicate records. I know there is a poster presentation about the University of Central Florida's experience with migration. Document things like how portions of your collection were catalogued interfaces using different standards and practices. We also recommend documenting the circulation practices of the library. If the collection was at one time not circulating but later started to circulate, that can explain why there are no circulation statistics for certain years. Another important piece of information is the handling of special formats. Maps or audiovisual materials may have been kept in another collection with different circulation policies. Of course, you will want to document portions of your collections that are or were served elsewhere. Maybe you need to remind the powers that be that you brought back all of the materials that have been sent to the law library because their inner mental conditions caused a mold outbreak. For instance. Also, if portions of your depository collection are in the main collection, be sure that they are depository stamped and the only records are noted in some way so that they don't get tossed out in a weeding project. An important part of the history you collect is the names and stories of the people who made the organization collection what it is today. Tried to interview the old-timers while they are still available and can remember important points about the library and its collection. On this slide, we included some photos and names of folks who are predecessors to help to shape the organizations and collections that we work in. I also wanted to note that the FDLP lip guides includes one about succession planning. I will put a link to that guide in the chat in just a moment. Next, I'm going to pass the ball over to Claudene. Thank you.

Everyone insisted that I turn on my camera, and I am sorry about that. Everyone assured me that you all wanted to see me. Okay, here I am. Okay. So, a little about myself. I am the government documents library and I have been at the University of Louisville since 2001. And I am going to look at what happens from the other side of what William was talking about. Before I arrived, this was all urban legend and lore because I was not here. Somewhere around 1998, 9090 1997 we got a new Dean and in 1998 she closed the standalone documents department. Half of the and two of the positions went to reference and two of the positions went to technical services. There were two Liberians and two paraprofessionals. One to each. By 1999, they had all quit. Urban legend says it was contagious, but I wasn't here so I don't know. When I got there, there had been two years without a real documents library. Someone had to took the position in the name, but nothing had been done with the depository during that time. When I got there, the first thing I did was, where's all the records? No one knew. I could not find any written procedure, policy, anything related to government documents. In history, check-in records, nothing. So, I guess it was out of sight out of mind. To say there was no succession was an understatement. What few written things I did find were sparse and out of date. Of course, many things were not done according to the depository procedure. For example, they had decided at some point to start using the online catalog as our check in record and abandoned the shelf list. But the head of cataloging decided to strip out the 086 field which put us in noncompliance. You cannot use that as a check and record. If you delete out the SuDocs number. So, the first things that I did is when I took over the depository, is when I try to get the procedures in order, what I could find what was there. The other thing I did the be in compliance is I created a written collection and also create a disaster plan. But they let me take out page one which was running out of the library screaming. The most important thing I did there was I visited a regional library very soon. This was very soon after I started. I drove to Lexington. I

spent the day with her talking to her about how things work. I had been a depository library and in another state. But things worked different from state to state. She was very helpful. I invited -- Sandy. I invited her also to come to my library and give a tour and identify what we were doing that was out of compliance and what we needed to do to get back in order. So, once I had found -- once I had created these policies and procedures in place, I wanted to put them somewhere. This didn't happen immediately. I will be honest. It took a while for me to figure this out. So we had policies and procedures and people's email. I printed out somewhere. I wanted to put it somewhere it could be accessible to a lot of people. I decided ultimately to use SharePoint. I don't think this is a love letter to SharePoint. It is not. It is a file management system from . I don't like it but it is free and we have it. And everyone, more importantly, it is a shared place that everyone has access to. So, even though on the depository library and, it is my hobby. My actual job is I am head of collection management now. So, the depository duties are shared between me and technical services. They take care of the cataloging. And the processing. But I am technically in the documents department. That is why these files are in the technical services department. And moving these files gives a broader access to everyone who needs to see them. And I looked at other things like wiki and lip guides. But ultimately, SharePoint was free. And the University was encouraging access. I guess that they paid for. Whatever they paid was too much. So, we were encouraged to move everything out of shared drives into SharePoint anyway. So, this is just a quick overview of what I did. Here we go. This is the government documents page. Overhear it's just on your right. Just some links out the stuff. Some commonly used tools to help catalogers. And then we have the files for the policies and procedures. Our check-in records. And something I will get to in a minute. Surveys. We go here. This is the procedures page. All our current policies and procedures are at this one page. So you know that you're working for the most recent procedure and you don't have to worry if you have the right one or whatever. This is where if at any time it is updated, it is replaced here so everyone has that access. The other thing I did is I told you earlier that when I came, there were no files or folders. Two months after I came, I had to do the BIA annual survey. In a library of unfamiliar with. I actually came from a public library. All is also a little unfamiliar with academic libraries. I had to do a biannual survey and it was, let's say, unpleasant. So, this only happened like three years ago. I was looking for stuff, but I opened it on file cabinet in the corner. In the bottom, there were all the biannual service. I did not find these until like 2018. But just in case, my 02 succession planning is I had a assistant scan all these and put them here, so now it can be found easily, and I kept a copy. Everyone can find a copy easily. Looking at SharePoint sites isn't that exciting. I wondered how this concept we kind of applied to the government documents Roundtable. In Kentucky, we have a very active government documents Roundtable. I am a big proponent of state organizations. They provide educational opportunities that are much more accessible than maybe national ones are. And they can be advocates on your behalf. It is a good way for especially new libraries to develop leadership skills and you can get -- you can have mentoring opportunities to be a mentor or to find a mentor. It really helps me. I would say the state organizations of both Missouri and Kentucky helped me the most when I became -- when I was any librarian. But most importantly, I think it is the networking because of Kentucky GODORT I now know most of the depository librarians in the state and I feel comfortable enough to reach out to them for help and advice. Okay. I won't say I did do this. Someone else came up with it. One thing we did was the written procedures for the government documents Roundtable is a real loosey-goosey. What you do when you're in the chair or what you do when you are the secretary-treasurer is not really laid out. One of the former chairs wrote the guidelines on responsibilities for new incoming chairs and new incoming secretary-treasurer is. A lot of times, they are new librarians who don't know because that is who you usually pass these things onto. Is a new librarians. She wrote these. Now there on the website. Anybody, if you are thinking about becoming the chair at the so what you have to do. And you have an idea of how it operates. The other thing she didn't was another brilliant idea is we went and gathered all the meeting minutes we could find. We got them back to the early 80s but not complete. We haven't

complete from 2000 forward. This is one thing I will reiterate. Find these people before they retire. The majority of the meeting minutes we got were for from people who are now retired. We scan them all again. We scan all the meeting minutes. They are here in one place. I wish we could find them all, but I think a lot of them are just lost to history. Some of them before this, there is a folder that is passed from chair to chair of GODORT with just random documents. There were a few meeting minutes in there. But not complete. We found what we had to complete. Here, this is just an example. This is the oldest one we have. I agree with someone. Old meeting minutes are a great source of history. I totally agree because if you read a spring minute meetings from May 20th, 1982, it was an exciting meeting because the Ohio GODORT chairperson from the University of Cincinnati was a guest, and Jean Whitaker's wife is there also. That is my section, and I'm going to pass it on to Angela who is going to talk about state libraries.

All right, good afternoon. Good evening, good morning to everyone. Happy to be here. Of course, thank you, Gwen, and thank you, Claudene. Where I am coming from here is actually as former depository coordinator at the Texas State Library and archives commission. I saw kind of both the passing of the succession planning and what was available from my 26 year predecessor to when I left in 2021. With the documentation that I was able to provide or continue, I should rather say, when I left. I was there from about 2015 to 2021. And before I kind of go over or the way that I find kind of my case study was to take all of the main components that Gwen had outlined and sprinkle some tips along the way. But by means of further kind of laying out the foundation which might make our situation a little bit unique was that documentation was at the core of everything that our unit, which was the information services unit, was built upon. So the Texas State Library and archives commission is a standalone state agency which not only includes this state archives and library collections, but one other division which is records management. And so with records management practices as a requirement as a state agency, we had great documentation. So, unlike clotting Claudene, very quick to have all of our by biannual service available as needed was quite a bit of our collection history. As the depository coordinator, it was quite important for a couple of reasons. One, obviously, for reporting and not just the biannual report, most state agency have biannual reports that they have to provide. As well as just kind of the information as a documents coordinator that was my responsibility. I think the mark that I put on succession planning was what I kind of turned every day succession planning. I am not as thinking about, well, when am I going to leave? This position. But when am I taking a vacation the next time or when it might unexpectedly going to be out? Well my boss, the state archivist, along with the rest of my team be able to get to the information that they need? And so I focused a lot on making sure that our policies and procedures remain up-to-date. Crosstraining a staff. I eventually was promoted up and was preparing to pass along my depository responsibilities to someone else, so I was fortunate in that way. Even all the way down to our library assistants who are really the daily managers of this collection for them to continuously be thinking about, oh, we are doing something a little bit different. I should make sure that that is reflective in our policies and procedures. It became part of our everyday practice of how we kept the collection at the forefront of everyone's mind. And so I would put in addition to the library assistants who processed the documents and pulled into a lot of the inventory where our reference librarians and reference archivist were obviously very keen and you will see why to make sure that they understood the subject matter and content in organization of our collection in the course of their work and of course the third prong of all this is actually cataloging. I think that would be another unique thing that primarily the heads or leads of federal documents collection was with kind of reference to in research services. I was the head of verses within cataloging. That certainly did mean that was a very important relationship for decisions that were made or needed to be documented. Somewhere. So, starting kicking off with this first light-year. The library history here, the establishment was circa 1845. That was the date of annexation vortexes. We know that prevents previous agencies or departments. We had an

agency or department that was responsible for state history. That preceded the State Library and archives. The main purpose of our library is that it upholds the state archives. We are responsible for the state government records and other original records and items that belong to the state of Texas. Any locations and moves right now? The state archives, which is a picture here is right on the state capitol grounds. Before that, we actually had materials -- identify specific, likely not -- of dormant documents in a -- hut. There was a major renovation in 2008 which there was lots of documentation thankfully for that and probably one of the newest is that they had -- they have found or are working on building additional off-site storage. Disaster specific to the state library, none at least recently, but we are Texas. As a regional, we support libraries across the state which is a very flood prone and hurricane prone state. We did have disaster plans of course, but we also assisted with that many of our selective libraries with their disaster planning as well. Which could be its own, I think, course. The depository history of the state library, we are actually in unknown establishment, as I mentioned. We have a predecessor prior to Texas joining the union and there are documents or at least history in fact that prior to Texas joining the union, there is exchange of documents with the U.S. government as well. It is the federal doctrines collection is a sacred separate collection. It is a close tax as are most of the collections at the state library. All of the collections at the State Library and archives. We use SuDocs classification. All of these have summary in our collection development policy which was built out and then further grown out by under me to make sure that the federal documents collection had kind of an equivalent document policy collection as the rest of our collections that we have. Which does include the state publication, so we are a repository for both state government publication and federal documents. That really does help in understanding the importance of these collections to the entirety of the State Library and archives collection. As I mentioned also, the State Library and archives is a single standalone agency for everyone that knows or kind of works in the state library and or state archives world. I believe both the state library and archives are under one roof and under one agency. I emphasized that because the federal documents is considered part of our library collection as is a state publication along with general reference collection in a family history collection. All of those seem to support the original documents and records that are to the state archives. And that was a really important point to make sure that was throughout our documentation. Because, as I mentioned, the main purpose of the State Library and archives, if you could show how these other collections support the historical and research value to that kind of prime or primary collection, it really does help and it does heat through as you are giving reports or providing reports to decision-makers. Some of the unique things about the depository is that we are a full-time conservator. The value of that in addition it is having a conservator is that the conservator is a lot of time to work on preservation with conservation of all of the collections. You can imagine that of course, their primary or one of their primary purposes is to ensure the original documents are preserved and conservator. The state archivist actually ensures that all publications and original materials have time with the conservator or are assessed by the conservator. It is wonderful that we can fall under that umbrella. Which does mean that we tend to kind of not function under many partnerships. I think that the collection is as widespread here you will see kind of in the statistics that I will give later because we are able to I think more kind of support and assist rather than have support her. Who knows how things will go? In terms of in the future. Where things might go or need to go. Some tips I have for this as I already mentioned is kind of the main connections to the commission and including a connection development policy. I really can't emphasize those things enough. I think the value in doing that for me as an example is that when I heard the state archivist say or be able to speak about the federal documents collection, and its importance to the state archives and need for it to be on-site you need for to have a full run within the stacks. You really can't ask for anything more than that. When the time and support is needed. So, following on with collection development, the strength or I think it's mostly that we are actually a regional depository with no plans to reduce or renew. Which I think that part has no plans to reduce or remove our is braver and rarer. I think one reason that is the case is because of the

amount of documentation and reporting that is required. And just the connection and awareness that the state archivist and state library and have in understanding how all these collections are about government history and supporting the archives and records that we have in there. As I mentioned already, having another depository system which was a program that was slashed quite a bit meant that we were one if you'd repositories that were actually able to still receive state publications. We also run that program. But it makes it very easy to understand the equivalency and importance of state publications and federal documents publications. This is more tips but not really about documentation, although maybe I will step back from that. This is actually a photo of one of many displays that future government documents collections. This one specifically on the U.S. census. I was actually able to pull this photo from the library blog. The action my reference librarian started. A petition to have this so that they could really bring the collection out of the stacks into more people and you can imagine that that just ballooned during the pandemic. But what we also did here was we gave a running list with the SuDoc number, the title, and maybe subject area or something like that. That unto itself is I think a documentation that can be really handy. It can go back, stacking go back or whoever, or even reference librarians can go back if they're looking for a quick list on any given subject that we may have featured in the past. And the same is true for social media, making sure that that is kind of something that maybe you're capturing to make sure that you know what was featured getting the statistics on that as well. And then incorporating it into larger exhibits. As I already mentioned, we do have exhibits or display cases that usually feature something from the strengths of the archival collection, but they always are requesting archivist are always requesting to have that put into context with the federal and state locations that we own as well. Again, those exhibits kind of what was pulled and used and is actually quite helpful when you are doing historical research on any number of given subjects over time. So for our technical services, I think this is a little bit of a rarity. In the other way so much that the federal documents collection was managed under the research versus primarily under cataloging which doesn't mean that cataloging didn't play a big role on a as you can see from my list here. Where the show flips list was lost during renovation. We rely on the ILS catalog records that are ingested in the brawling by the librarians and the close stacks. We do accept quite a bit of expertise across the reference library and reference archivist and just cross-referencing in understanding how to really use the print to pull from different SuDoc sections on any given research request that we might have . And so again, some test that I have for this is document the decision that both Gwen and Claudene talked about. Any exceptions that are made that are more like house rules , making sure. That was something I had the building. We didn't really have that prior, but of course we can see just how important. That discussion led to, where does this information need to live? In my mantra to my staff is always put the information where someone is going to need it. We use a lot of the ILS system in those function which the head cataloger was a strong proponent of and encouraged to make sure that we could understand where those document decisions came from. And of course we met regularly with cataloging and now we have those meeting minutes and part of our records management. Documentation that we have. Automation is pretty limited. Our library assistants are processing as they did back in the 90s, 80s, and 70s. We do have in-house digitization, but is primarily for the judicial archives if not solely for the digital archives. It is only original materials that do get digitized and placed on our digital archives platform. For circulation, we have a noncircular collection, but that is not too uncommon for our researchers. All of our collections are nonsearch waiting. I guess in that way, it is easy enough because their consulting and using our publications for the archival material and records that they can't do gullible. But they to do I LL, certainly not on the level of the library's or academic libraries, in which case Wilson both hardcopies and scans assessing whether the rarity of the item that is being requested for, but the big tip I always gave my reference librarians anytime we got it to government document request was to refer back to the FDLP libraries where they may have that item closer to them. As I mentioned, we have a U.S. documents collection development policy which outlines kind of the not circulation in the instances

where we are able to lend. We'll end under I LL. For shelving, we have closed stacks. We are very fortunate to have dedicated stacks floor. Our federal documents collection runs its full run. And we actually also have off-site storage. I was in the process of leaving while that was, but you can imagine one of my outgoing memos was, what would this mean for the government documents collection? I did my write up memo on my assessment of off-site storage as it related to U.S. documents. The U.S. document collections were not simply our collection, but the collection as a whole. The archival materials as well as the state publications, our general collection, and the family history research collection. Some tips I can have about that was showing which, again, what I see as everyday succession planning because a lot of these ideas came out of our library assistants who are our primary pullers and chauffeurs and inventory workers. In a way. Out markers, this actually came out more of the practice of what we were doing on the archival side. When you pull archival materials, you got to make sure you have that out marker. Half the time it is staff and the other half it is actually out to a patron. Way finders was actually something again that our library assistants really did work hard at adding a process together. Which I was very happy that they did because it meant that they were really thinking about succession planning. I may understand how this run runs, but I may forget or someone else -- I may not be the only one. They became big advocates of using way finders. Again, I think in a small but big way that everyday succession planning really helps people get the job done. I am kind of happy to and and thank everyone for joining this session. I look forward to any questions everyone might have. I hope that was helpful.

Yeah, I have been monitoring the chat and I haven't really seen any questions. It is mostly comments. People liked Claudene's picture that we she started out with. Valerie mentioned that they started adding 583 retention notes to the cataloging records for Fed docs in the main collection. Canal or people that they have in there. Charlie is archiving surveys, biannual surveys. Valerie and Laurie both pointed out that LS CM has scan and digitize all the biannual surveys that they have. If you don't have copies, they should have them. And people loved the document about camels that Angela used. That was a great engaging document. Let's see. Do you also write -- Barbara asks, do you also write in over words, if so, how do the and all reports relate to other documentation we have? I know in my collection we do right annual reports that list things like all the important projects that we did. It has our annual statistics about election growth, circulation, reference, and we also list all the employees which has turned out to be really helpful because sometimes you're trying to remember a student worker you had 10 years ago. So having all that in the annual report is important. And we had our five minute warning. Do Claudene or Angela have anything to add about in over words that people have been talking about? -- Had asked, what are way finders? Angela, can you address that?

Sure. Way finders was really, I guess in a more simple way, certainly not a Pathfinder, but it was really just taking a permanent laminated note to say that this run continues here. That's the simplest. Especially if it didn't continue on the next shell. As I said, we were fortunate enough to have continuous showing for our federal documents. And then they got a little bit more complicated or it had to be just in terms of giving instruction, say, for example, when the CFRs, what is that schedule for superseding? It was a lot easier for the library assistants to have that where the CFRs war. It was really handy to have that laminated way finder right where they needed that information. And then they ended up finding other applications throughout the collection where way finders could be helpful. But it was as simple as just saying, you know, we had to split this run. The run continues here. To, you know, this got a different SuDoc number. We had on at the beginning and the end of , say, where the old SuDoc was to say that this run is not under this new SuDoc. And where the new onset, if you need older one, go to this SuDoc number to just helping right at the point of where they were doing it any superseding. I hope that helps.

Thanks. Thanks, Angela. Jenny also commented that they have a wiki for reference questions. I think a lot of us probably have some system where we share reference questions so that we can look back over them. Nancy how we answer. Having a database of reference questions is another important part of documentation. Are there any additional further questions? We have some people use QR codes in the stacks. That point to the -- version. That's a great idea. And some thank you's. We are just about out of time. Unless there are any final questions. Then we will go ahead and wrap up. Thank you all very much for attending.

Thank you all for participating. Thank you, everyone. Tomorrow, join us back noon Eastern for our third and final day of our conference. With two more DLC sessions. Thank you all. See you tomorrow.

So, Angela and Claudene, thank you so much for being co-presenters on this.