Chair's Column
by Anne Rottmann, Missouri
LRL Chair

I hope that everyone is enjoying a glorious fall. Before we know it, the holidays will be here and we will be busy with those preparations. It was wonderful to see all the attendees in Harrisburg for our annual Professional Development Seminar. We had 29 librarians from 20 states and D.C. Big thank you’s to Evelyn Andrews and Susan Zavacky for planning and implementing the seminar. We all appreciated your efforts. Summaries of the programs and the business meeting are included in this issue.

John Phelps, Chief Clerk of the Florida House and current Vice Chair of the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee talked to us about the legislative institution and how the institution and the public perception of it is changing. Rich Jones, NCSL Director of Legislative Services, talked about the new design of the NCSL’s web page and asked about our concerns and suggestions.

Welcome to Frances Thomas of the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library in Louisiana who has agreed to serve as a regional coordinator. She joins the other six coordinators who have agreed to continue. Thanks to everyone who responds to the coordinators, please continue responding.

Revisions to the LRL bylaws were adopted at the seminar with one minor change. Please see the homepage for complete bylaws. Thanks to Clare Cholik, Debbie Tavenner and Susan Southworth for working on the bylaws update. I am pleased to see that our listserv is being utilized. It’s a great means of communication among libraries, and I hope usage continues to increase. If you’re not yet connected, please contact Rita Thaemert at NCSL to sign up. Call her at (303) 830-2200 or e-mail at rita.thaemert@ncsl.org

At the LRL business meeting was a suggestion to put our acquisitions lists on the LRL homepage. I have talked with Janna Goodwin in Legislative Information Services at NCSL and she is willing to put lists on the homepage. If Janna can get your lists electronically as plain text or rich text documents (with paper copy to verify format), she will convert them to html and add them to our homepage.

Deb Priest (NY) has graciously agreed to serve again as chair of the Notable Documents Award committee. Thanks Deb. Jonetta Douglas is heading up the Core Collection revision committee, joined by Dale Steele (AZ), Beth Furhush (MT), Marilyn Gutromson (ND) and Dave Harrell (OR).

Finally, I want to ask if anyone might have photographs of members at either Annual Meeting or PDS that they could share. We need graphics for the staff section CD-ROM. Also, if anyone knows the whereabouts of the staff section photo album, please contact me or Rita. Enjoy this issue of Newsline.

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LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH LIBRARIANS STAFF SECTION
National Conference of State Legislatures
1560 Broadway, Suite 700, Denver, CO 80202 303/830-2200
Chair: Anne Rottmann, Legislative Library, Missouri
NCSL Staff: Rita Thaemert
Professional Development Seminar  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
October 15-17  

Pennsylvania Panel  
Thursday morning, October 15  
by Kristi Curt, Oklahoma  

The professional development seminar in Harrisburg got off to a great start with a distinguished panel of speakers from Pennsylvania. The panel consisted of John M. Baer, a Philadelphia Daily News columnist and reporter covering Pennsylvania politics and all government branches including the Legislature; the Honorable H. William DeWeese, a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, who has represented his district since 1976 and has been the democratic leader since 1993; and Paul Beers, a legislative historian and author of Pennsylvania Politics Today and Yesterday.

The members of the panel discussed a wide range of issues regarding Pennsylvania politics. Most of the discussion focused on partisanship and its effect on the assembly and the state as a whole.

Mr. Beers discussed the enormous number of laws passed historically, the process of recording and archiving over the years and the development of the first legislative library in Pennsylvania. The discussion moved on to the issue of geography and how it plays a part in the local politics. The panel touched on other topics facing their state, including urban versus rural voting patterns. The debate then turned to campaigning methods such as grassroots campaigning compared to mass media campaigning. Mr. Baer voiced his concern that extreme views received validation in the media outlets. One point of consensus among the panelists was that the public has become disengaged from politics.

The speakers also reviewed a number of specific characteristics of the Pennsylvania legislative process. They talked briefly of the recent push for the Legislature to move into the electronic age, allowing access to the media and the general public.

We were given the opportunity to pose questions throughout the meeting. Overall the discussion provided insight into the various aspects of Pennsylvania politics and concluded after significant audience participation.

Your Professional Image  
Thursday afternoon, October 15  
by Jonetta Douglas, Iowa  

Renee Cardoza Lopinski, Image Consultant, began by reminding us that “you never get a second chance to make a first impression.” She then discussed all of the things that create that first image.

Our clothes, hair and all of the other aesthetics are important in creating a professional image. The concept behind the aesthetics is that looking your best translates into confidence and energy in your work and how you deal with people. This was implied or clearly stated by several of the pictures that Renee showed us. In these photographs, the whole feeling these people had about themselves was obviously changed by some simple changes in their appearance.

It is possible for small changes in the way we see ourselves to make a big difference in the way others see us. As professionals the days of the shawl wearing little librarian who spends the day sitting at a desk shushing patrons are long passed as evidenced with this staff section. As our role within our various agencies grows, so too has the professional image that we need to exhibit.

Capitol Preservation  
Thursday afternoon, October 16  
by Joyce Grimes, South Carolina  

Chair Anne Rottmann introduced Ruthann Hubbert-Kemper, executive director of the Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee, since its inception in 1982, when it was created by legislation. The committee is bipartisan and is responsible for the preservation and restoration of the capitol building, its historic art and artifacts that include the Commonwealth's collection of more than 400 Civil War flags.

The committee's 14 members are either appointed by officials of the Legislative, Executive and Judicial branches of Commonwealth government or hold membership by virtue of office. In creating the committee, the Legislature provided for the establishment of a "Capitol Restoration Trust Fund" that may receive both public funds and contributions from the private sector. The fund, administered by the state treasury, is independent of the state general fund and is used for various preservation projects.
One of the legislative mandates of the Capitol Preservation Committee was to develop a long-range master plan; a program for the preservation and restoration of the entire capitol. To meet this objective in 1993, the committee contracted for the preparation of a report. A four-volume set, The Pennsylvania Capitol, A Documentary History, was printed to illustrate the building's history, architecture, furnishings, decorative arts and fine arts. The volumes contain historical text, illustrations, footnotes, appendices, drawings and documentation on original specifications, conditions and later alterations.

One of the projects highlighted by Ruthann was the Civil War Flag Project to preserve the Civil War flags of Pennsylvania regiments. She detailed the creation of the conservation laboratory used to conserve, document and store the flags, which were unfurled, photographed, examined and treated before placement in environmentally controlled storage. Evolving from this project was a two-day flag symposium, the first of its kind in the U.S., providing a forum to discuss flag conservation topics. Another noteworthy conservation project was the conservation of the 43 Violet Oakley murals.

Recognizing that many original pieces of furniture located throughout the capitol complex suffered years of neglect, the committee is attempting to locate the original pieces and document the collection with an optical disk-based archiving system to inventory and track each item. The optical disk inventory system provides visual access to corresponding 1906 furniture drawings by capitol architect Joseph M. Huston. A recent project is the incremental restoration and maintenance of the historic clocks located throughout the capitol. Capitol artist Edwin Austin Abbey's original color's were discovered through complex paint analysis after removal of layers of grime and discolored varnish, to restore his beautiful works throughout the capitol.

Ruthann's passionate dedication and commitment to the preservation and restoration of the Pennsylvania capitol earned the Capitol Preservation Committee the Prestigious Honor Award for 1995 from the National Trust for Historical Preservation for its innovative programs, publication, comprehensive documents and long-range maintenance guidelines. She is an excellent advocate to possess and convey the knowledge and enthusiasm so valuable for historic preservation.

Tour of the Legislative Reference Bureau Library and State Library Rare Book Room
Thursday afternoon, October 15
by Anne Rottmann

Hosting the tour of her library was Susan Zavacky, Legislative Librarian. She explained that her nonpartisan agency was founded in 1909 by an act of the legislature and she serves 12 attorneys who are responsible for bill drafting for the Pennsylvania legislature. Her agency also edits and publishes the codified state laws, Pennsylvania consolidated statutes and the state regulations (administrative rules).

The State Library is the second oldest agency of Pennsylvania state government. We were privileged to get to view the library's rare book collection. Our guide was Alice Lubrecht, director of the State Library. The collection contains laws books and other books that were purchased for the Colonial Assembly of Pennsylvania, begun in 1745 by Benjamin Franklin, who also served as first state librarian of Pennsylvania. We read the personal account of his famous electricity experiment during the lightening storm that he wrote for the Pennsylvania Gazette. Other items in the collection include small press books ranging from 1493-1997. A copy of Locke's Philosophy, histories of kings and queens of Europe and related law and court documents.

Legal Research on the Internet
Friday morning, October 16
by Beth Furbush, Montana

Genie Tyburski, Research Librarian, Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP, and web site manager for The Virtual Chase™ A Research site for Legal Professionals, presented an invaluable session on effective approaches to Internet research: Genie first asked us to clear our minds of keyword thinking and consider the types of resources we used in pre-Internet days such as card catalogs (subject arrangements), research guides, shelf browsing, encyclopedias (beginning with a known source), or librarians (asking an expert). We need to continue to think well and critically in our choice of effective electronic resources. Genie then gave us examples of finding each type of resource on the net:

→ Card catalog type resources such as CataLaw http://www.catalaw.com/; Findlaw http://www.findlaw.com/; Librarians' Guide to the Internet
items, educational material, and advocacy group, trade association or company information (so long as you remember the biases of the source). We were cautioned to remember that anyone can publish on the web, that technology facilitates trickery and rumor can escalate rapidly with long-lasting effects.

Remember to verify sources—you can go to internic.net to check the domain name registration. Note that .org sites can be any nonprofit group and may be highly biased. Always check for currency (you can check under 'File-Page Information-Date last changed') Genie mentioned as an example that the Cornell Law School site currently uses the '96 version of the US code.

More good information is available Genie’s site at http://www.virtualchase.com.

Records Retention and Archives
Friday afternoon, October 16
by Susan Southworth, Connecticut

Pennsylvania’s Division of Archives and Manuscripts, headed by Harry F. Parker, is responsible for maintaining and making accessible its depository of permanently valuable public records, beginning with its 1681 charter from Charles II to William Penn. The 20-story Archives Tower adjacent to the capitol is filled to capacity with Pennsylvania history. The archives were created in 1903 as part of the State Library, but in 1945 were integrated into the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Pennsylvania has been a major publisher of state documents since the 1850s, having to date published 138 volumes of Pennsylvania Archives. Mr. Parker’s division has actively responded to technological advances and is currently scanning these and future materials onto compact disk. Technology has also required that the division take an ongoing role in creating guidelines for electronic records management. The division is working with a committee on imaging guidelines to help implement industry standards. Each layer of technology mandates another layer of expertise and a caring, motivated staff.

He suggested that the Association of Information and Image Management has a wealth of information to assist in drafting Requests for Proposals if and when we are faced with an imaging project. However, keep in mind that their directives are fairly open.
ended and generalized in order not to restrict an agency's ability to choose an appropriate vendor and source system. This can create problems for records management where we need to ensure long term portability of a set of documents. To be safe, therefore, he advised not to save documents solely in a proprietary environment, but to save them as .TIF files as your standard, and then convert to another format like PDF for access. This is especially important when scanning large files and is corollary to saving text files in ASCII, providing maximum flexibility for the future.

Mr. Parker went on to discuss the concept of a public record. Unlike some other states, Pennsylvania has no overriding public records law with a clear definition of a public record. Their Freedom of Information law identifies only fiscal records, leaving open to interpretation the extent of records this might cover. The Senate has introduced a bill mandating an extremely broad definition, too open in Mr. Parker's estimation. His own preferred definition of a public record would be "anything created or received in the course of transacting public business." From an archival acquisition or records management perspective, however, his definition would not require that every record be archived. He referred to the rule of thirds applied to an agency's work product: one-third should be tossed, one-third moved to off-site storage and the remaining one-third would be needed on site.

A good records management program implemented wisely will save space and time by defining the extent of information that should be collected by an agency. He maintains that only records appropriate to the mandates of the office should be collected and no more. Information an agency collects beyond its scope can easily become a legal liability, by being legally discoverable and potentially damaging. In his words, "all records contain information, but not all information rises to the level of a record."

Mr. Parker's discussion was followed by a personal tour of the archives. Our thanks to him for a thought provoking segment of our program.

LRL Business Meeting
Saturday morning, October 17
by Johanne Greer, Maryland

The business meeting was informative and gave everyone the opportunity to express opinions and concerns about the Legislative Research Librarians group as a whole and about the effectiveness of NCSL as an institution. The first order of business was a wonderful speech by John Phelps, Vice-Chair of the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee (LSCC) for NCSL. In his other life he is the Clerk for the House of Representatives in Florida. He talked about how NCSL has evolved into a very important organization within state legislatures, particularly for the staff. NCSL is the staff's most important ally when it comes to professional development. Its mission is to continue to grow and adapt to new challenges as state legislatures continue to evolve into formidable institutions.

The role of legislative employees is changing. John felt that all new legislative employees should know how NCSL can help them do their jobs better. As trusted relationships are established between staff and legislators, staff are placed in the position of offering advice. Staff must become more assertive and begin to speak up for the moral order of the legislature as an institution. With the election of new legislators with various agendas, staff will be under increased pressure, their workload will increase and become more complex, and they will encounter longer work hours.

John talked about how legislatures are becoming more partisan, there is less comradery, and the general public is becoming more idealistic, doubtful, and quite cynical about the institution. Legislators are more professional, and behave more as free agents with their own individual agendas, leading to more organized debates. The rules have also changed. Ethics laws are stricter and more complicated. A good rule of thumb for legislators to follow is, if you have to think about whether something is right or wrong, it is probably wrong.

The very core of the institution is being challenged with term limits. Legislative staff must offer new members training to enable them to perform at top speed in short order. There is no grace period where they can sit back and observe. John felt that special focus should be put on the history of the legislature, so new members understand that they did not create the institution and that it is still evolving. Spouses should be involved in the training process, to give them a basic understanding of what is involved in being married to a legislator. Having a strong family relationship is important.

Power is becoming decentralized, and the use of initiatives, referendums and constitutional amendments are gaining in prominence with the public. New trends are impacting the way people
think about democracy. The world wide web could change the way we vote, allowing people to register and vote online. This convenience could encourage more participation in the political process.

Rich Jones, NCSL Director of Legislative Programs, was next on the business meeting agenda. He spoke about NCSL’s homepage and NCSLnet. Rich works with legislators and staff sections, making sure computer staff from different states have direct access to the NCSL data base. He answered many questions, listened to comments about the homepage, showed us a video, and gave an overview of recent changes. The page has a new cosmetic design and is easier to use. Rich encouraged us all to use the site on the homepage that allows us to submit comments.

The goal is to make the use of the site as simple as possible. He is working with states to arrive at a common format that is easy to understand, and he is asking all states for their documents so they can be made available for searching on NCSLnet. New software allows the computer to read more documents in various formats. Presently there are 500,000 documents, including bills, reports, audits, etc., but more are being added. The old Legisnet documents are still on the data base.

The NCSL Intranet page has a data base of speakers and trainers. It presents training panel sessions, speeches, and other material, with fees and ratings. A searchable data base of rules and procedures of all state legislatures will be coming soon. Rich said NCSL is trying to figure out how to make the papers on the Intranet available to everyone without violating copyright laws. Rich asked us to send in disk format any memos we think might be helpful or useful to other states, as well as our state documents, for NCSL to publish on the net. Names would be blacked out to protect privacy.

Rich presented the newly designed Legislative Research Librarian’s homepage. All present pronounced it to be very nice and easier to use. We discovered that going through the LRL homepage to get to Legisnet brings up a different page than using the FIND command on the NCSL homepage. The officers will discuss exactly what should appear on the homepage and what parameters should be followed.

Clare Cholik, chair of the LRL Bylaws Revision Committee, reviewed the minor changes that were made to the bylaws. The bylaws were adopted as amended, with the addition of one typographical clarification at the end of Article IV, line 6 to take out the period and the bracketed [OR] and replace it with an AND. There was no further discussion of the bylaws as amended.

Jonetta Douglas has organized the Core Collection Committee (see Chair’s column). Deb Priest, Chair of the Notable Documents Awards Committee, thanked everyone who worked on the committee and everyone who submitted documents for review. She is looking for volunteers to help select winners of the 1999 awards. Beth reminded us that we may resubmit documents that were not selected in previous years. The committee starts reviewing the documents in January. Most of the regional coordinators will continue to gather information for Newsline. Frances Thomas (LA) will take over the coordinator position held by Eddie Weeks (TN).

The 1999 Professional Development Seminar (PDS) will be in Sacramento, California. Suggestions were made for an informal handbook to be used by hosting states as a guide for planning meetings. Another suggestion was to have an early notification of PDS seminars so that librarians can make requests in their budgets, but the actual registration list cannot be finalized more than three weeks before the meeting.

Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee
October 3-4, 1998
Denver, Colorado

Budget, Finance and Rules Committee
by Clare Cholik

At the NCSL Executive Committee meeting, the Budget, Finance and Rules Committee received a report on the collection of dues from the states, as well as on NCSL’s plans to expand their office space to an additional floor in the Denver office. The committee also approved many grant proposals that were brought to them by the NCSL staff. In addition, a lengthy debate ensued over a proposed bylaw change. The proposed change would eliminate language in the NCSL bylaws currently preventing the election of two successive NCSL legislator officers who come from the same region of the country. The matter was ultimately tabled until the next meeting.
Planning and Designing a Legislature for the Future
by Clare Cholik

This LSCC Task Force is focusing on the future of the legislative environment and the role that legislative staff will play in it. Term limits and the technology explosion are just two examples of forces that will definitely impact the legislative institution. Legislative staff members need to be prepared to adapt to those changes and more. The task force is spending time contemplating what changes will likely take place, what staff will need to do to be ready for those changes, and how the task force can persuade legislative staff members to think about and prepare for the future.

Promoting, Developing and Improving NCSL Services and Products Task Force
by Jonetta Douglas

The task force is chaired by Joyce Honaker who is the Committee Administrator from the Kentucky Legislative Service Commission. This task force will continue to work on the CD-ROM project and will assist NCSL with the development of their communication plan. It was noted that the CD-ROM needs more graphics from many of the staff sections, so we are still asking that staff section members make available any staff section photographs.

We discussed the implementation of the 1996 LSCC Strategic Plan and the plan’s progress. We discussed the redesign of the NCSL web page, and for those of you interested in seeing the RFP, it is accessible on the web site. The task force members also made suggestions for some changes in web page functions that would be helpful to staff.

It was suggested that staff sections need to take a more active role in the development of their web site pages. It was expressed that in order for complaints from staff sections to be addressed, they must show some interest in the use and upkeep of the page. There is still ongoing discussion of the public and password-protected areas of the NCSL web site and how necessary these restrictions are. This task force has a continuing goal to make legislative staff aware of the services that are available and how they might better assist each another using NCSL as a vehicle.

Public Service and the Legislative Institution Task Force
by Anne Rottmann

The charge of this task force is to increase public awareness and respect for public service and the legislative institution by promoting their positive aspects. The committee brainstormed several ideas and four sub-task forces are looking into producing videos, one on the path of public service and the other on the responsibility and pride associated with representative government. A third sub-task force would look at a possible Internet presence with connections primarily to schools to improve the image and understanding of the legislative process. The fourth sub-task force will address current NCSL projects and report on updates and expansions. A decision will be made at the next LSCC meeting in January as to which of these projects will be our primary focus.

Task Force on Promoting and Developing Professionalism of Legislative Staff
by Susan Southworth

Listening to the discussion in Denver, I was impressed by the intensity of the members’ interest in promoting legislative staff opportunities and involvement. Major issues included: review of the 1997-98 project to distribute material about NCSL to new legislative employees through agency personnel officers, which seems to have been quite successful; establishment of a sub-task force to evaluate the Legislative Staff Management Institute and the Senior Legislative Staff Executive Training Institute; helpful guidelines for joint staff section meetings; and the trainers and presenters data base being developed for the NCSL web page. Two topics raised more lengthy discussion: the possibility of a staff exchange program and the potential for audiotaping/ videotaping staff section meetings for those not in attendance. In both cases, committees were requested to investigate and report at the January LSCC meeting.

Coordinators’ Corner

News for this column is gathered by a dedicated team of coordinators who call and fax to libraries and librarians in their regions to get the latest news and ask preassigned questions. The questions for this issue were:
1. Has your library business increased or decreased in the last few years?
2. How has your business changed? To what do you attribute this change?

Coordinator MARIAN ROGERS, Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau

from Marian
Use of our research services and legislative library has increased over the past few years. Since our move from the capitol in 1990, the amount of business conducted by telephone has increased substantially, while our walk-in use has decreased. We now conduct more business via facsimile machine and e-mail.
Staff often spend time instructing, usually by phone, library users who need help with the Legislature's or LRB's home page. Assistance is given to access bill history information, text of bills and Wisconsin Acts, other legislative information and use of various information sources contained on Wisconsin State Agency web pages. We can attribute the changes to our physical location out of the capitol and to changes in the information needs of and the way Wisconsin citizens search for information.

Anne Rottmann, Missouri Legislative Library
In spite of the Internet (or maybe because of it) the Missouri Legislative Library's business has shown a steady increase over the past five to seven years. We usually have more business in election years. People and candidates want to know information about legislation, votes, etc. Some has to do with new tools we have acquired, i.e., Westlaw and EBSCO Host. Hopefully some of it is because we are trying to be more visible and the jobs that we do bring about repeat business. All I know is that there is always somebody wanting information.

Raymond Collins, Illinois State Library
Library patrons business has had no significant increase or decrease in the last several years. However, since the Illinois State Library moved into its own building nine years ago, patron business at the library has changed. Before, a good deal of reference work was with state government and other libraries in Illinois. Now, since we are more visible, we have a large mix of patrons, including genealogists, historians, independent researchers, academic students, the general public and government.

The single most important factor in change of service has been the relocation of the Illinois State Library from occupying an office in a building to having its own building. For the last few years, the Stat Library also offers the use of the Internet on its several multiple access public terminals, and this has certainly drawn a variety of users. The State Library has several different meeting rooms that are heavily used by state government offices, a draw for library users.

Kate Graf, Missouri State Library
While the Missouri State Library has not conducted any formal studies to date, the consensus is that the intake of reference questions have diminished, while the time spent in formatting electronic data files or monitoring and maintaining electronic access has increased. Library staff is involved in more training of the end-user in accessing the online electronic services provided in-house and over the Internet.
Some of the library's constituents have migrated to using electronic files through the Internet to do their own research. They frequently request help in how to search or how to use the various search engines. In creating their own bibliographies, they tend to request everything on a topic, and so the interlibrary loan service has increased. We are also looking at ways to pull together useful information and repackage it for focused marketing of our services. Changes can be attributed to the increased access to information via the Internet and the growing agency intranets. Electronic files are moved between creator and end-user, documents are downloaded at will, and there is an apparent immediacy to obtaining information through electronic access. No more waiting several days or weeks for items to come through interlibrary loan.

Debbie Taverner, Ohio Legislative Service Commission
I reviewed the library statistics to answer this question and can report that the number of people seeking library services remains fairly even since the early 1990s. I sure feel busier, however. Part of that is caused by the pressure to respond quickly because people expect information quickly. The library's business has changed to include an online book catalog and an online legal memo database with lots of challenges. The library started the entire office moving toward LEXIS-NEXIS and PREMISE at the researchers' desktop. Library staff offer training, provide searching hints and assist in trouble-shooting with those products.
The library was also one of the first areas to have Internet access. Now that all researchers access it at their desks, the requests have lessened, but the library staff is called upon frequently for assistance to locate materials on the Internet. Two years ago the library became the location of agency rule filings; another library staff member works as a backup to the administrator of that office function. Also two years ago the library took over the functions related to coordinating the publication of the final bill analyses and Digest of Enactments. I can attribute the changes in our business to the availability of technology at reasonable prices. The pressure to find information quickly is due to the amazing ease of information availability. Office reorganizations account for some of the new duties. A complete change of staff, except for one person, in March of 1997, is a big factor in everyone feeling busier!

Coordinator CLARE CHOLIK, South Dakota Legislative Research Council

from Clare
I have noticed no dramatic changes in the volume of information requests. They have remained quite steady and that surprises me. I feared that once all of our staff gained access to the Internet, they might not need me anymore. That, however, has proven not to be the case. They do more of their own research than they once did, but they still turn to me when they cannot readily find the information they need or when they are under tight deadlines. Even though the amount of research I do has not substantially increased, I feel more pressure today to produce results more quickly. People are no longer willing to wait a day or two to find answers. They want you to stroke a few computer keys and retrieve it instantly. That has always been true to a certain extent in the legislative environment, but I think it is even more true today.

Jonetta Douglas, Iowa Legislative Service Bureau
The business in the library has increased in the last few years, and we are very happy about it. Part of this increase is simply that more legislative staff members, partisan as well as non-partisan, are aware of our presence and the fact that library services are available to them as well as to LSB staff. Some of the services that we provide have increased. We can now do some of the routine research that drafters used to have to do themselves.
We have a very good working relationship with the staff from the State Law Library and have a fairly good grasp of what they can or cannot provide.

There is also a State Agency Libraries Association (SALA), and being a member of this group has been very beneficial. Although there has been an increase in business, we intend to continue to market our services and welcome any suggestions that have worked for others.

Marilyn Cathcart, Minnesota Legislative Reference
Our official reference statistics have decreased in the last few years. However, librarians note that the type of question has changed drastically. Today questions are often very difficult to answer and require a lot of in-depth research and clever reference creativity. It has been suggested that library users are often able to answer the easy questions by using the Internet and they bring the hard questions to the library staff. Fortunately, LRL has established an active role in managing the legislative web site, creating and maintaining information for the web, cataloging Internet resources, providing technical assistance and training on Internet-related topics, and we are now busier than ever.

Marilyn Gutromson, North Dakota Legislative Council

With e-mail, word processing functions and Internet access, the nature of legislative library work in North Dakota has been irrevocably altered. Some aspects of the change produce excitement, some much frustration. No longer do we dictate correspondence, memos, or reports for support staff to rough draft. As a result, we squeeze time a little tighter, spending more hours in the office after closing and on weekends. Responding to e-mail requests lays on additional research demands. When persons using e-mail fail to provide proper e-mail return addresses or at the very least a phone number, we temper our response.
Using the web certainly allows us to locate a myriad of marvelous resources thereby making up for some of the detrimental aspects of technology. Glitches in the computer cause great distress. It has become like an appendage necessary for movement! Once a heathen, the legislative librarian forced by circumstance, became a computer convert. Yea, at some point she may even learn the language necessary for zealous status. Business has increased in the council library. No doubt, the computer did it! Legislators, attorneys, historians, students, lobbyists, and citizens contact us via e-mail in greater numbers than they did on the phone, by snail mail or in person. Crafting a sane reaction to what's hit us becomes a major priority. LRL help!
Nebraska Legislative Reference Library
Our library business has decreased slightly in the past couple of years, but the complexity of our work has increased. All Nebraska legislative staff have access to the Internet at their own work stations, so we are asked less often to compile information, but are more often asked to help sift through the wealth of information available online. Also, the Nebraska Legislature appropriated funds for ALL Nebraska libraries to have access to the H.W. Wilson Select database (in FULL TEXT!!!) via FirstSearch. This, in addition to our own subscription to ProQuest, has most of our bases covered when it comes to obtaining journal and newspaper articles quickly. As we all know, in a legislative setting, the ability to provide quality information quickly is essential.

Coordinator, FRANCES THOMAS, Louisiana David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library

Alabama
Library use has increased a little. There is more use of electronic media. More information is available on the Internet and recently went on Westlaw. Some state laws are available on disk. People are more aware of what is out there and how to use it.

Mississippi
Library use is about the same. There is more use of computers because information is easier to obtain.

Louisiana
Reference is up approximately 10 percent over the last comparable session (1996). New legislators are using the library more. The library is promoting its services, including e-mail postings of available information. Electronic access has allowed the library to provide more information more quickly. This allows for more satisfied users and in turn increases library use.

Tennessee
The use of the library has increased as the number of lawyers on staff has increased. Also, it seems that many more legislators are becoming aware of NCSL and CSG publications and are turning to the library for these publications. The library's business has changed in that many of the requests are now electronic and the answer is requested in electronic format. These changes are simply part of the ongoing electronic revolution. We're adapting as best we can.

Coordinator IRENE STONE, California Research Bureau

Nan Bowers, Nevada Legislative Research Library
The library has had a steady increase in library assistance and major reference queries, but the greatest increase has been in requests for legislative history packets. A proposition passed on the November ballot to limit the session to 120 days, and that means library work will be more intense over a shorter period of time. The session will be 30 days shorter. They will have a digital audio system, which will be on their web site and possibly on CD-ROM.

David Harrell, Oregon Legislative Library
The use of electronic media has increased and staff are being trained in the use of electronic resources. Even though the legislature meets every other year, the workload has increased during the interim.

Frances Enos, Hawaii Legislative Reference Bureau
The workload from the legislature has not increased, but there has been some increase in phone calls from the public and a much greater number of e-mail reference questions.

Coordinator TRACEY KIMBALL New Mexico Legislative Council Service Library

from Tracey
Library business in New Mexico has increased some in the three-plus years I've been here, although we don't have enough of a statistical base to measure the change. I think these are contributing factors:
- more library outreach, including orientation for new bill drafters and legislative staff in other offices, and selective dissemination of information to legislative staff;
- recent devolution of complex responsibilities like welfare and telecommunications;
- increased public awareness of legislative information and services because of our legislative web site (not maintained by the library).

Computer technology has created the most dramatic changes in how we do business. Full-text searching for bill and statute data bases has become equally important to our use of print indexes, and the world wide web has significantly changed our ability to identify and retrieve information from other sources. Both contribute to a faster turn-around time for fulfilling requests, which seems to lead to more requests.
Susan Gilley, Oklahoma Legislative Reference Division
We are slightly behind in statistical overviews, but we believe library usage is in a downward trend the last several years. We have several pet theories about this. Staff turnover in both central staff and member secretaries/assistants may result in newer people who do not feel as comfortable calling us as those who have known us longer. It takes time to get acquainted and even longer to build trust and credibility. Many members shared secretaries and the most were session-only employees in the past. That is changing. All Senate assistants are now full-time and work for only one member. Although many House assistants are session-only, just a few still have to share.
Term limits seems to have had an interesting impact also. The percentage of incumbents being re-elected seems to have increased; this may decrease the use of the library, as many of them directly to other sources. The expanded availability of the Internet from member and staff offices may also play a role. As more members get direct access, they rely on it more than they do us until they realize it is not THE answer to everything. The increasing number of bills and the constitutionally reduced length of sessions makes for a session that leaves little time for actual research; most research has to be done during the interim when members are in their districts more than they are at the capitol.
The bottom line is that we don’t have a clue about either usage or the reasons. We continually strive to add new services and look for ways to make ourselves more visible. Our usage by legislative assistants (secretaries) is increasing as we completed our second year of active contact with them on a one-on-one basis. So who knows....

Coordinator JOYCE GRIMES, South Carolina Legislative Library

from Joyce
We’ve been in a temporary location since 1995 that has somewhat decreased walk-in traffic. But phone calls, faxes and e-mail requests have increased. Marketing efforts encourage more use of library facilities and we see some success as committee personnel contact us on a regular basis now.
We’re doing less print research and more electronic research. With legislative documents on the Internet, the library focuses on user education about what’s available on the web. We also provide detailed documentation about what the library does on a daily basis. This change can be attributed to technology and the employment of younger staff who are eager to learn what’s available in the library.

Cheryl Jackson, Virginia Legislative Reference Library
Yes, business has increased. We receive many more requests for legislative history and more requests from DLS staff for in-depth research. I view this as a reflection of our competence and service—the more you build, the more they will come! Also, we give a lot more technical assistance than we did a few years ago. Like many libraries, we have become the trainers of staff on Internet research.

News from the States

ALASKA
Mary Pagenkopf and the staff of the Alaska Legislative Reference Library are putting the reports required by the legislature on their web site and will also be putting other unique items online. Their web site is <www.legis.state.ak.us>. They are sending indexes of tapes and files to the archives. The library will be moving to a new location early next year and merging with the research agency.

CALIFORNIA
Researchers and librarians of the California Research Bureau have been gathering information and preparing extensive subject bibliographies for the orientation of new legislators and legislative staff. Due to term limits, there will be a large number of new legislators.

HAWAII
The Legislative Reference Bureau has contracted to put their online catalog on the web and expect to be online by the first of the year. Four libraries will be included: the Legislative Reference Bureau, the Supreme Court Law Library, the Business Resource Center and the Municipal Records Center.

IDAHO
Emily Quinn, Legislative Librarian, has started a new indexing program that will generate a subject index for the bills, using Windows NT. The previous system was downloaded from a mainframe.
MINNESOTA
Marion Matters, Head of Technical Services for the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library, passed away in September. Marion was an extraordinary woman who was creative, organized, full of energy and optimism. Among her many accomplishments, Marion lead the design team that structured and developed the contents of the legislative website, participated in the Vendor Evaluation Team for the Minnesota statewide online system, managed the library’s Technical Services Department and served as a member of the overall library management team. An archivist and librarian, Marion brought the best of both disciplines to the many contributions she made. She is greatly missed.

NEBRASKA
Please change our email addresses. They should read
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achristensen@unicam.state.ne.us
Mary Rasmussen, Librarian
mrasmussen@unicam.state.ne.us
Deb Emmons, Deputy Director of Research
demons@unicam.state.ne.us

NEW MEXICO
Amy Weig-Pickering has joined Tracey Kimball as a new library associate. She recently completed her MLS at the Pratt Institute, with experience at the New York Public Library. Her email address is aypickering@state.nm.us.

NORTH DAKOTA
On invitation of the North Dakota Law School librarian, the Legislative Council librarian recently taught basic legislative history research to 70 freshman law students. In past years, the legislative librarian shared similar information with third year students at the university. Either law students are getting brighter or the presenter’s bulb is dimming. This traveling librarian will train public, academic, and special librarians at three locations around North Dakota on use of the bill status system in preparation for the 1999 session. This cooperative journey with staff at the North Dakota State Library offers review of basic legislative paper and electronic resources.

WASHINGTON
GILS (Government Information Locator Service) is a program of the Washington State Library dedicated to providing public access to government information. The main product of GILS is Find-It! Washington, a collection of online search tools to help citizens find government information. The State Library was awarded a federal grant to replicate the program in three other states: Oregon, Mississippi and New Hampshire. Check it out at: http://www.statelib.wa.gov

What’s New?

PDS 1999
Mark your calendars for next year’s Professional Development Seminar, October 14-16 in Sacramento, California, having one or two joint sessions with National Association of Legislative Information Technologists (NALIT). Accommodations at the Hyatt Regency Sacramento, registration $119 per night, single.

Marilyn Gutromson, North Dakota is the newly-elected vice president/president elect of the North Dakota Library Association. Following the September NDLA conference, she assumed library leadership responsibilities for the next couple of years.

Marilyn also recommends the publication, The Sale and Conversion of Not-for-Profit Hospitals: A State by-State Analysis of New Legislation. Volunteer Trustees Foundation for Research and Education. 1998, (202) 659-0330

Anne Rottmann, Missouri has been appointed by the Governor to the Missouri Historical Records Advisory Board that is assigned to the Office of the Secretary of State and is the central advisory body for historical records planning within the state. The board serves as the state affiliate of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and is responsible for reviewing grant proposals to the program from Missouri applicants.

from Sally Reynolds, formerly Texas Legislative Reference Library
Retirement is great, but I miss seeing and working with all my friends. It seemed strange not to be at Annual Meeting this year, but I really appreciated the postcard. My e-mail address is j_sreyno@texas.net

Mary Bone, former Library Coordinator at CSG has relocated to Pitney Bowes in Louisville, Kentucky, as a Records Manager.
from Jennifer Boteler, formerly Idaho Legislative Reference Library

Dear LRL,

It is with deep regret that I am writing this good-bye. During my three short years of involvement with the LRL staff section, I thoroughly enjoyed meeting and working with many of you. I believe that the LRL staff section’s greatest contribution to participating librarians is the networking. Legislative librarians are small in number working in a unique field of librarianship. I quickly learned that although legislative libraries vary greatly, we have many of the same information needs—things that are not published or available anywhere else but from legislative librarians or other legislative support staff.

I want to thank all of you who helped me through the years fulfilling patron requests, some that stand out in my mind—Marilyn Gut tromson for the literal box load, of legislative history information she mailed me on ND’s nursing requirements; Randi Madsen and her colleagues at the MN transportation library for graciously verifying bibliographic information on the spot because our editor needed to include it in legislation being prepared to go to first reading as we spoke; David Harrell for the many times he tracked down Oregon law-related things for me because a legislator had heard something on the news or read something in the paper and frequently had critical pieces of information wrong, and I especially enjoyed his dry sense of humor (Mr. Rogers lives!). I’d also like to thank Anne Rottmann for being my mentor and for her patience answering my questions about library budgets and core reference collections; Debbie Tavenner for her job coordinating the coordinators and for making me feel welcome in the group; and friendly, southern-belle Mary Bone (CSG) for her unsurpassed expertise in finding obscure state government information; and Rita Thaemert for not only being our NCSL liaison, but our advocate.

Because of a job change for my husband, our family moved to Olympia, WA in June. I began a new job with the Washington State Library on Sept. 8th. I’m a Senior Library Information Specialist on the Government/Washington Information team. The State Library staff is organized into self-directed teams that are guided by quality management principles. I help staff the Washington/Northwest Room managing several special collections including the territorial library, Washington author books, and newspaper microfilm collection. Washington does not have a legislative library, however, the State Library is the corporate library for state government cluding the legislature. I recently took a CD-LAW training class in a House offices computer training room. I couldn’t believe the resources the legislators and legislative staff have at their fingertips—numerous online and CD-ROM data bases made available through the State Library. Please feel free to contact me for Washington information, even if I’m not the one who should handle your request, I’ll make sure you find the right contact. Jennifer Boteler, Washington State Library, P.O. Box 42460, Olympia, WA 98504-2460, (360) 704-5204 jboteler@statelib.wa.gov

Emily Quinn is the new legislative librarian for Idaho. She is a graduate of Occidental College, has a law degree from Duke University and a master’s degree in library science from the University of Washington. Before moving to Boise in 1995, Emily worked as a law librarian for a law firm in Seattle and at the University of Washington Gallagher Law Library. Emily and I worked together for two weeks before I left, and she’s incredibly qualified and extremely competent. Please welcome her as one of your new comrades.

If you’re ever in Olympia, please look me up.

NCSL Publications

Copies of all NCSL publications listed here are available from the Marketing Department at 303/830-2200, unless otherwise noted.

BOOKS
Early Childhood Care and Education (reprint)
Financing of Medical Education by the States
Sexually Transmitted Diseases
Health Care Legislation 1997
Unmet Needs and Special Issues in Children’s Health Programs
Understanding Medicaid: A Crash Course for Policymakers
Access to Primary Health Care: A State Compendium

LEGISBRIEFS
Primary Enforcement of Seat Belt Laws, Vol.6, No.38
Bill Introduction Limits: An Update, Vol.6, No.39
Educational Standards and Teacher Training, Vol.6, No.40
Domestic Violence and Children, Vol.6, No.41
Partner Notification and HIV, Vol.6, No.42
Managed Health Care Accreditation, Vol.6, No.43
Appointing Committee Chairs, Vol.6, No.44
States Curb High BAC Drivers, Vol.6, No.45
Biomonitoring, Vol.6, No.46
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