Chair’s Column
by Jonetta Douglas, Iowa
LRL Chairperson

This issue of Newsline contains information about LRL at Annual Meeting and the Professional Development Seminar. Thanks to Evelyn Andrews and Susan Zavacky in Pennsylvania for all their early efforts at planning our October meeting. Thanks also to Clare Cholik for covering all of the sessions at LSCC in San Antonio.

Participants in the LRL Staff Section are being encouraged to come to ASI meetings. Please see the ASI article. Included in this Newsline mailing is a copy of the 1998 LRL Directory. Thanks to regional coordinators for submitting the updates.

Speaking of regional coordinators, LRL is losing Jennifer Boteler, Idaho Legislative Reference Library. She is moving to Washington State in May. We’ll miss her prompt and thorough responses to requests and her enthusiastic participation in LRL activities. She would like to continue as a regional coordinator until PDS in October. Thank you and best wishes, Jennifer.

Awards to be presented at Annual Meeting are the LRL Notable Documents Award and the Legislative Staff Achievement Award. Two LRL committees are considering nominations. Please contact Deb Priest in New York about Notable Documents and Nancy Quesada in Texas about Staff Achievement. Here’s a look at our Annual Meeting schedule. Sure hope you can join us in Las Vegas!

Tentative Agenda
LRL at Annual Meeting
Las Vegas, Nevada---July 20-23

Monday, July 20
4:15pm-5:30pm  LRL Panel Discussion
“Librarian Duties Outside of the Library”
6:00pm-7:00pm  LRL Reception

Tuesday, July 21
8:00am-9:30am  “Public Information, the Internet and Technology”
12:00noon-1:30pm  Legislative Staff Luncheon

Wednesday, July 22
9:45am-11:45am  “Thomas Jefferson”
(Joint with RACSS, LSSS and LSS)
12:00noon-1:30pm  LRL Staff Section Lunch

Thursday, July 23
10:15am-11:45am  LRL Business Meeting
2:15pm-5:00pm  Tour and Demonstration
James R. Dickinson Library, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, including the Gaming Resource Center

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair’s Column</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCSL Annual Meeting</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development Seminar</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly on State Issues</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinators’ Corner</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News from the States</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s New?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Section Regional Coordinators</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preview
Professional Development Seminar
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
October 15-17
by Evelyn Andrews, Pennsylvania Senate Library

The PDS will address many of the topics members are interested in learning about. On Thursday morning we will hear from a panel on "The Pennsylvania Legislative Process: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly." Thursday afternoon our speaker will be Renee Cardoza Lopinski on "Your Professional Image -- You're a state worker and a Librarian!!" and now you have to participate in casual days! Out with the sensible shoes and on with the flip flops. Friday we will be addressed by Genie Tyburski, a "cybrarian" on "Legal Research on the Internet." Genie will discuss research techniques and criteria for analyzing the sites for accuracy. Friday afternoon, the Pennsylvania Archives and Records Retention Offices will tell us about the latest techniques for records management.

Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee
January 23 and 24, 1998
San Antonio, Texas
by Clare Cholik, South Dakota

The Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee met January 23 and 24 in conjunction with the Executive Committee. The committee devoted much of its time to the work of the three task forces.

The Outreach and External Communication Task Force is focusing on how NCSL can provide new legislative employees with information on the organization and what it can do for them soon after they begin their jobs. In an effort to accomplish this task, they are contacting those in the legislative agencies who handle personnel issues to get an idea of how best to provide NCSL information in each state.

The Communication and Coordination of Professional Development Task Force has divided into subcommittees to work on several issues. One subcommittee is looking into the possibility of staff certification for legislative staff. Another is examining and gathering input from those who have attended the Legislative Staff Management Institute and the seminar for legislative staff executives held last December. A third group is working with members of the Communication through Technology Task Force in an effort to develop a multi-media interactive presentation to promote NCSL.

The Communication through Technology Task Force reviewed the continued progression of the NCSL web site. The subcommittee focusing on standards for legislative information on the internet has discussed this issue via conference call with legislative employees from several states and will continue to gather information from other states. The committee also spent time discussing the multi-media interactive presentation as described above.

On January 24, Anne Walker, Staff Chair of NCSL, called a meeting of those members of the LSCC who represent staff sections. The group discussed ways in which staff sections could join together to sponsor professional development seminars. Several of the staff sections have already co-sponsored seminars, and for the most part, they have been successful. Participants in this meeting agreed that combining efforts is worthwhile not only in terms of the possible financial savings, but also because of the interaction it allows among the staff sections. It became evident, however, that some staff sections would likely never be able to work with some of the other staff sections because of a wide variance in the amount of support they seek from outside sources.

Assembly on State Issues (ASI)
Frequently Asked Questions

What is ASI?
ASI is one of two committee structures used by NCSL to serve its members. Unlike the other committee structure (the Assembly on Federal Issues, which directs NCSL's lobbying efforts in Washington, D.C.), ASI membership is open to legislative staff. ASI serves as a major forum for the exchange of ideas and information among state legislatures. It allows legislators and legislative staff to benefit from the experiences of other states in shaping public policy, experimenting with new laws, and managing the legislative institution.

How does ASI accomplish the goal of sharing ideas and information?
ASI holds three meetings each year, providing an exchange of information through timely and relevant work products and through networking opportunities for legislators and legislative staff.
How is ASI structured?

ASI committees focus on different topic areas, including Arts and Tourism; Children, Families, and Health; Communications and Information Policy; Criminal Justice; Education; Fiscal, Oversight, and Intergovernmental Affairs; Legislative Effectiveness; and Science, Energy, and Environmental Resources. There is also one task force: the Redistricting Task Force.

Do I have to be appointed to a committee or task force to participate in ASI meetings and activities?

No! ASI meetings are open to all legislative staff, regardless of committee membership. Staff interested in the issues addressed by ASI are encouraged to attend all meetings.

What can I expect from an ASI meeting?

ASI meetings have a structure similar to that of the NCSL Annual Meeting and staff section training conferences. Two plenary sessions addressing topics of wide interest are usually held while concurrent sessions are held on a variety of topics relevant to each committee or task force.

I need more information. How can I get it?

Additional information about ASI is available through NCSL's home page (www.ncsl.org), including information about each of the committees, a list of officers, committee work products, and information about upcoming meetings. You can also contact NCSL's Vicky Rodriguez at (303)830-2200 or e-mail Vicky.Rodriguez@ncsl.org. Jennifer Noyes, ASI's current Staff Chair, can also answer any questions you may have. You can reach her at (608)266-2818 (the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau) or e-mail Jennifer.Noyes@legis.state.wi.us.

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 that interest all of us.

The questions for this issue were:
In addition to your duties as librarian, do you have any other legislative assignments, such as committees, bill drafting, etc.?)?

What is your policy regarding service to the general public? Does it differ during session as opposed to the interim?

Coordinator JENNIFER BERNIER, Connecticut Legislative Library

Pam Schofield, Massachusetts State Library
My job is as Legislative Reference Librarian and I am part of the reference staff here. I have no other legislative assignments.
The State Library of Massachusetts is a state agency (under the executive as opposed to legislative branch) of government. It is a government research and law library and serves as the public law library for Suffolk County. Although we extend direct borrowing privileges to state employees only and not to the general public, anyone can use the library. We are open all year, Monday through Friday, from 9:00 to 5:00 (closed legal holidays). Although many of our main users are legislators and their staffs and committee staff as well as other state employees, we have many attorneys, paralegals, lobbyists, scholars, and members of the general public who frequent the collection. We, of course, extend borrowing privileges through interlibrary loan to those who do not work for the state.

Paul Donovan, Vermont Law Librarian
No other legislative assignments.
We serve the general public identically as we serve the legislature, in session or out.

Lynn Randall, Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
I am the Legislative Records Officer and coordinate records management in the Legislature with the Maine State Archives. I assist legislative offices in developing record series descriptions and retention schedules and in transferring records to the Records Center or the Archives for permanent preservation.
We combine a state law library and a legislative reference bureau, so some requests are not directly related to the work of the Legislature. By statute, we serve the citizens of Maine, and our goal is to provide the very highest level of service that we can without providing legal advice. That doesn't change during the legislative session, but legislative requests always have top priority. Requests from citizens from all over the state are welcome at any time of the year.

Susan Southworth, Connecticut Legislative Library
One part of the library's responsibility to leadership is to keep track of their appointments to legislative task forces, commissions, and councils. This is a cumbersome task, about which I would enjoy speaking with others with like responsibilities. It's about the only direct interaction we have with leadership, so I am interested in continuing this
relationship while maintaining the list accurately and efficiently. We have to be open to the public, although we do not advertise that fact. With our small staff, we need to utilize our time giving service to our primary clientele, both in and out of session. In addition, the state library, across the street with its far larger resources and Law and Legislative Reference Unit of five and a half reference librarians, is quite able to assist most public questions as well if not better than we. We are, however, very free with those portions of our collection not generally available elsewhere (usually that amounts to OLR reports).

Coordinator CLARE CHOLIK, South Dakota Legislative Reference Library

from Clare
I staff the House and Senate Education Committees during session. This mainly involves drafting amendments for education bills during committee hearings and at other times. I was hesitant to take this on at first, but it has actually worked out pretty well in all respects. The best part of it is that I get to witness first hand my research work being put to use, and I think librarians need that once in awhile.
Our library is open to the public. They can use our resources at any time, and I am always happy to help them get started in their research. However, if they need further assistance, I provide it only as time permits. All requests from legislators and legislative staffers come first. The policy does not differ depending on whether or not the legislature is in session. I do, however, have much more time to assist the public during the interim than I do when the legislature is meeting.

Beth Furbush, Montana Legislative Library
My main additional responsibility is closely related to library work. I am responsible for records management oversight for the Branch. This is becoming especially interesting as we try to merge four formerly independent agencies and as we try to get a handle on electronic filing and archiving. The public is always welcome to use our library resources and we provide general guidance as time permits without taking on research projects. We do (for a minimal copy charge) copy materials such as committee minutes when they are not available elsewhere. We occasionally circulate items to the public during non-session times, but through experience have learned to avoid letting any crucial materials go out of the office. During session we do a great deal of outreach to the public to help them understand the legislative process.

Marilyn Gutstrom, North Dakota Legislative Council
During session, the research librarian takes on the additional task of indexing substantive entries in the daily House and Senate journals. Library staff also works very closely with the committee clerks. A major component of that relationship means collecting minutes, testimony and tapes to begin the process of preserving and accessing legislative history records. The library assistant spends much of her time during the early days of session working with the Legislative Council's legal and fiscal staff on the fiscal note process. Grass don't grow on a busy street.
The question about serving the general public reminds me of an attorney for the Secretary of State who wandered into the legislative library years ago. Without a word, he sat at the round study table, laid his head down, then muttered: "I hate the general public." The distraught man's assignment involved drafting a response to a citizen's concern over the number of rusty grills in North Dakota parks and the danger they posed to pregnant women. We ran the argument up the flagpole that rusty grills provide a good source of iron, but it didn't fly.
In or out of session, we try to accommodate even general public-hating attorneys. As a rule, library staff never leave a request for a legislative history record on their desks overnight. Request in, response out the same day. We try to reach that goal even during session, staying until the task is complete. While the legislature works, we usually prod attorneys from executive branch agencies to do their own legislative intent research. We also frequently ask members of the general public to assist even in minor ways like doing their own photocopy.
Marilyn Cathcart, Minnesota Legislative Reference Library

Library staff participate in the management and development of the Minnesota Legislature website. The Minnesota Legislative Reference Library is open to the public at all times. However, public users may not check materials out of the library except through interlibrary loan via another library. Public users must use a pay copier to make photocopies. Since our primary clients are legislators and legislative staff, requests from those people take precedence over the public users, but we always try to help everyone to the extent that time permits.

Anne Christensen, Nebraska Legislative Reference Library

The Nebraska Unicameral houses its own bill drafting and indexing offices. The Nebraska Legislative Reference Library assists these offices with general information requests, as well as assisting the Legislative Research Division with interim study research. The library also conducts some limited research for legislative staff.

The Nebraska Legislative Reference Library is considered a special library in the sense that its collection is defined by its users and their needs. Users in this setting include senators and legislative and division staff. The library is not open to the general public other than to provide copies of very specific legislative documents.

Coordinator MARIAN ROGERS, Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau.

from Marian

Although we do not have any legislative assignments, the index librarians are responsible for publication of the Indexes to Legislation throughout the legislative biennium. Other legislative responsibilities include publication of the Index to Clearinghouse Rules and Directories to Lobbyists and Lobbying Principals.

Our library is open to the general public at all times.

Taran Ley, Illinois Legislative Research Unit

Similar to the research staff, the Legislative Research Unit librarians also write research reports for the legislators and their staff. The reports include general correspondence letters and more in-depth research responses.

Unless a member of the public is referred to us by a legislator, we will generally help with only minor matters and refer them to an appropriate state agency. This policy does not change, whether during session or the interim.

Elaine Harrison, Library of Michigan

We do not have additional legislative assignments. However, we assist in training for use of various electronic resources.

The Library of Michigan is a large special library with many special collections, and because of these collections, our service policy for the general public remains constant during and between sessions. Our two team structure (Legislative and Special Collections) enables us to maintain services for the public at the same level year round.

Anne Rottmann, Missouri Legislative Library

No other legislative assignments.

We respond to requests from the general public, but requests by the members of the General Assembly and staff take precedence. If a request requires a lot of photocopying, we may turn it down because we do not charge for copies. Obviously during the interim we have more time to respond to requests from the public and in a more timely way.

Debbie Tavenner, Ohio Legislative Service Commission

In addition to running the library for the Legislative Service Commission, I am the records retention officer, physical disaster coordinator for the office, and assignment clerk and coordinator for the digest of enactments. The library staff respond to research requests when the topic does not require a subject specialist or attorney.

The library is not open to the public unless this is the only location that owns an item. When I get a call or a visitor from outside the legislature, I try to be of assistance, but usually must direct them elsewhere.

Coordinator TRACEY KIMBALL, New Mexico Legislative Council Service

from Tracey

The principal non-library assignment in New Mexico is editing some of the session-related publications of the Legislative Council Service, such as The Voting Record of the Legislature and Veto Messages of the
Governor. Other duties as assigned include being liaison for the state publications distribution program and responding to the rich variety of surveys and questionnaires from publishers, other legislative and state agencies, and students. (I could call some of this reference work but often its just going back to the person who dumped it on us and writing down their answers.) During the session we log in amendments for the print shop and provide occasional back-up for opening and distributing legislative request files. We are open to the public (telephone, fax, and e-mail requests, as well as walk-ins) but provide restricted photocopying and faxing services compared to services for legislators and legislative staff. Having lost floor space and shelves with the last office remodeling, we currently have just one chair for visitors but expect to recoup some workspace for the public in the next office remodeling. Material is not checked out to the public, although we rarely circulate anything to legislators in their home districts either. Legislators and legislative staff requests usually have priority during the interim and always during session.

Dale Steele, Arizona Department of Library, Archives and Public Records
The library has no non-library duties. At one time the state library had a Legislative Reference Bureau with responsibilities for assisting with the drafting of legislation, but we now serve the legislature by providing research assistance to members, staff, and other legislative agencies. The department is also the state library.
We serve the general public, although providing service to the legislature gets highest priority because the department is a legislative agency. We do not restrict services to the public during session. At most, we may ask a client to leave a computer workstation if it is needed for research by or for legislative staff.

Dolores Lanier, Colorado Legislative Council
Librarians work on Senate confirmations, boards, and commissions. Other jobs include working on amendments, planning conventions and meetings, staffing committees and providing statistics for leadership on committee workflow. We even planned for the dedication service of a stained glass window.

The general public can use the library, but we prioritize questions to do legislative members and staff questions first, then all others.

Susan Gilley, Oklahoma Legislative Services
In addition to our duties as legislative librarians, the two of us daily provide a total of six hours of public reference assistance in the law library. Some questions are legislative in nature, others are completely law related. We also deal with a lot of people who confuse us with legal aid. We have a mandate to track and report creation, termination, and changes to agencies, boards, and commissions by the legislature and the governor. This report must be distributed within 30 days after the end of the session. In order to prepare the report by the deadline, we add to our session activities the reading of all enacted legislation, including the repealer sections of bills.
The legislative library is administered by the state library, so we serve not only the legislature, but also the executive and judicial branches, as well as being open to the public. We allow public access to the law collection and to the legislative reference subject vertical files, and refer users to additional sources of information. We also provide assistance to public users, including instruction in the legislative process (practically a full time job!), in using particular resources, and in using our library. Materials circulate to only elected officials and state employees but may be photocopied. Vertical file materials are rarely checked out except to the legislative branch. Service is provided 8am-5pm, Monday-Friday, session and interim. Legislative librarians give priority and extra attention to legislative requests, including constituent requests routed through members or staff. Nevertheless, we estimate that approximately 75 percent of library users requiring assistance are members of the general public and such reference assistance consumes about 50 percent of our time.

Nancy Quesada, Texas Legislative Reference Library
We do not have extra duties outside of our library functions. However, as part of our library responsibilities, during the legislative sessions, we have the library staff assigned to each chamber to track the actions on all of the legislation, and they are present in the chambers for all sessions “from gavel to gavel.”
We are located in the capitol and open to the public. We answer telephone (and occasionally fax and e-mail) reference questions from the public. Members of the general public may not borrow materials from our library, but may borrow materials from the state library, located in the building next to us. We have an open stacks arrangement and a coin-operated photocopy machine. We also have computers available for public use and printed copies of all current legislation (paper bill files). Our policies do not change during the sessions.

Coordinator JOYCE GRIMES, South Carolina Legislative Council

from Joyce
We have only one librarian, and two part-time students: law clerk and M.L.I.S. graduate assistant. My duties as librarian are varied and at times seem to involve my business education more than my library education. I truly enjoy the work, especially being of help to my patrons.
(a) With the part-time assistance of college students, the library distributes a large number of statute mandated publications. Some of these publications are the code, revisions and annual supplements, annual acts and joint resolutions, annual bound journals of the House and Senate, and The Supreme Court advance sheets and Reports. Mailing lists are maintained by the librarian.
(b) The library sells additional codes and supplements to statute-mandated entities. This task requires implementing inventory controls and maintaining funding accountability.
(c) Over the years, select documents have been mandated by statute to be filed with the Code Commissioner. The library serves as the official filing repository for these documents.
(d) Establish data bases for library support.
(e) Promote public relations opportunities.

Our foremost directive is to serve and support the members of the General Assembly and their staffs. When a request is received from the general public, it is evaluated for complexity and for the amount of time required to reply. In my conversations with the public, if I am unable to provide assistance with the research, I direct them to a resource and give them a contact name. Most of the questions received via telephone, fax, or web can be handled by directing the requestor to their local county library if the request is from within state. The legislature provides to each county library a set of the codes, annual supplements, journals and acts. If it is an out of state request, and the information is available from our web site, I'll direct them to the web site. Fortunately, we have a good legislative web site that provides an easy search protocol. Having worked all three branches of government helps me to respond to requests. Usually by the time an individual gets to the legislative library, they are at "wits end." I try to help the individual through the maze of bureaucracy. It is my objective to provide a competent answer to the question. If I am unable, I strive to provide an alternate quick competent source. If it's an instate person, I ask for the name of their elected legislator so that I can alert the legislator. This is a wonderful opportunity to provide a service for the legislator to his constituent. What I have experienced is that the legislator is appreciative of the extra time, and it also provides an opportunity for the library to be visible with the legislator.

Cheryl Jackson, Virginia Legislative Reference Library
I am sometimes given other legislative assignments. For example, I was recently the backup staff person (acting in a research associate role) to a permanent legislative commission, and gave it up only when library duties became too time consuming. I have also attended our bill drafting seminar and was considered a backup drafter.

The general public is welcome in our library to perform their research or use the internet. However, the research assistance they receive is limited to our showing them where items are located. Photocopies are 10 cents per page. This policy does not differ during the interim, but, of course, we have more traffic from the public during session. We receive many requests from the public for legislative history and we perform this research, as we are the only people with access to the drafting files in which legislative history is kept. Photocopy fees for this service are 25 cents per page.

Cathy Martin, North Carolina Legislative Library
No non-library assignments.
Our entire physical facility (both library locations, stacks and all) is open to the public during regular hours; one location is kept open during legislative session and is open to the public then as well. Part of our mission is to serve the public. Given, however, that our primary purpose is to support the research and information needs of the Legislature, its committees and staff, our reference services to the public are limited, primarily to the status of bills, bill histories, and copies of study reports. We also provide onsite assistance for anyone wishing to do
research in committee minutes and other primary legislative materials. We have nothing per se that dictates a difference in handling of such requests during session as compared with the interim.

**Susan Zavacky, Pennsylvania Legislative Reference Bureau**
I occasionally teach legislative information and orientation classes to new staff and/or interns.
The library is open to the public for research only, no interlibrary loan or borrowing. Copying by LRB staff is limited. We do not differentiate between session and non-session days.

**Lynda Davis, Maryland Library and Information Services**
Other duties as assigned covers a wide range of activities for Library and Information Services. Library staff coordinates the program for legislative visits by constituents, school groups and international visitors. The program involves publication preparation and scheduling speakers. During the session, we provide staff to record Senate proceedings for the bill status system. This year we also provided staff (Johanne Greer) to the Senate as assistant journal clerk. The library indexes the journals for the House and Senate, as well as the session laws (Barb Speyser). The publications editor (Margie Forsyth), with help from librarians and information officer (Sherry Little), writes and edits the department newsletter, weekly Legislative Wrap-up during the session, and a post session constituent newsletter for members. Other publications include daily synopsis of introduced bills, roster and list of committees, and weekly schedule of hearings and meetings. Finally, we serve as ADA coordinator, scheduling interpreters for the deaf, for committee and floor proceedings upon request.
We have no formal written policy concerning service to the general public. We provide access to session information through our Information Desks, telephones, and the General Assembly web site. We are also the distribution point to the public for legislative publications. We do not provide research services for the public. However, we do try to answer specific questions concerning legislation and provide citations to the code. Many questions are handled by referring the caller to the appropriate agency or to their public library. We photocopy materials for a fee and limit the number of pages to 35. Practically speaking, the limit is sometimes hard to enforce if we are the only source for the document. The public is welcome to use materials in the library and we assist them. The priority for responding to research questions is: legislators, staff, state agencies, and the general public.

**Coordinator JENNIFER BOTELER, Idaho Legislative Reference Library**
I am responsible for indexing all legislation, including draft legislation, by subject. This subject index is used for our bill tracking publication, *Daily Data*. It is the same index that goes in the House and Senate journals and the session laws. I am also responsible for organizing, indexing, and binding standing committee minutes.
By statute, this special library exists to serve the legislators and legislative staff. We are a public library in the sense that our collection is open to the public, and we will assist them in using our collection. We frequently answer questions from the public by telephone and through e-mail/internet. However, we do not provide research assistance to the general public.

**Barbara Porter, Oregon Legislative Library**
We sort of work outside the library. We are part of the larger Policy and Research Office and sometimes perform functions related to that office, such as staffing the Senate floor session for the governor's executive appointments, managing the web site for the library and the office, and publishing the Daily News Clip.
The public is treated like any other customer, but our first priority is to legislators and legislative staff.

**Linda Heatherly, California Office of Legislative Council**
I am not involved with committee work or bill drafting or other legislative assignments, but do have a time-consuming role as supervisor of a double unit known as "Library/Publications" the latter part as manager of our agency's receipts of print copies of bills and other legislative materials, including files, journals and histories, and copies of chaptered bills in different forms. On a daily basis during session, clerks who work under my direction sort about 60 copies of each bill, file them in four locations, in multiples, and send them to other staff members to be filed on other floors of the building. They take print copies of legislative materials to offices of 80 deputies, if they have been requested (e.g. the statutes) and keep one copy of each item in a mini-library on each floor. We serve people who serve legislators directly, our deputies are involved in bill drafting. This supervision a big part of my job.
I refer all questions from the public to the state library, but answer some in these categories: (a) "quick and dirty"—easy to answer and to be compassionate if someone has been transferred from one office to another or when all that’s needed is “have you tried our internet site?” (b) Tough questions—relevant to our specific area of legislation/codes revision, with a possibility that our library may have unique resources or expertise to answer the question.

Hawaii Legislative Reference Bureau
No duties outside the library.
Serve the public for everything but fee-based online search and extensive research.

Nan Bowers, Nevada Legislative Research Library
No duties outside the library.
Nevada’s legislative library is open to the public but materials do not circulate. During the session and the interim, we serve state and local government personnel, judicial staff, attorneys, lobbyists, businesses and the general public. We provide telephone and e-mail reference and assist walk-in clients. Much of our service involves providing materials and assisting in the use of legislative history documents. Service to legislators and legislative staff is our first priority, but assistant to non-legislative branch personnel comprises over half of our time.

Coordinator EDDIE WEEKS, Tennessee Office of Legal Services

Helen Hanby, Alabama Legislative Reference Service
In addition to librarian duties, I am responsible for the upkeep of the Code of Alabama data base, which is used by LRS for bill drafting purposes and the same code data base that is accessible on the Alabama web site.
The Legislative Reference Service library is used primarily by our staff, other legislative staff and legislators. The general public is always welcome to use the library, whether or not we are in session. The public may use materials in the library, but no materials can be taken from the library.

Suzy Hughes, Louisiana Legislative Research Library
For each session, the librarians index all House and Senate instruments to create three subject index documents: (1) all legislative instruments introduced, which appears on the internet and in the Legislative Calendar; (2) all legislative instruments that pass the legislature, which appears on the internet and in Resume; and (3) all acts and resolutions suspending the law, which appears in the Secretary of State’s Acts of Louisiana.
Our library has never been open to the public but was once open to state agencies. However, because of increased demand for library services from members and staff, the library is now restricted for use by legislators and legislative employees. We do provide a very popular public service by phone, the PULS (Public Update Legislative Service) line, which includes access for the deaf and provides the latest session information on bill subject I.D., bill status, committee meetings, and guidance in accessing the information on the internet. The service is available all year long.

News from the States

from Susan Southworth
Connecticut’s legislative home page, www.cga.state.ct.us, now includes a web page for our Office of Legislative Research. Here you can find recent reports highlighted, as well as an archive of earlier reports. We have been experiencing some difficulty achieving consistency in the content and are continuing to work with our ITS department to clear up problems. Please feel free to call/write/e-mail if you need assistance. To find these reports, go to the legislative home page and click on: Staff Offices, then choose Office of Legislative Research from the list. There are a few caveats to its use, however. Statements made on the first screen make it look as if the content goes back to 1993, I don’t know why because it definitely does not.

Reports are back to January 1997 at this point, with more being added. On the search screen there is a drop down menu that includes the year 1996. Again, this is optimistic. We are planning to load documents retrospectively but it’s misleading now. Another word of caution, the OLReporter online does not scroll from one page to the next. You have to pay attention to the segments listed at the top of the page (e.g., Page One, New from OLR) and click on each of these in order to find the entire issue. The site is in its infancy so has the flaws of inexperience, but it’s full of great information! Visit it and see.
Kudos to the Washington State Library! The Washington State Senate passed Resolution 1998-8709 honoring and recognizing "the priceless research assistance, technology, and customer service offered by the employees at the Washington State Library." The senators wrote that "legislators and their staff rely heavily on the efficient research, vast resources and quick turn around of the state library and its staff." Wouldn't it be nice if all legislative librarians received this kind of feedback from legislators! (For the full text of the resolution, visit the Washington Legislature's Internet site at http://leginfo.leg.wa.gov/www/ses.htm)

Eddie Weeks

and the Office of Legal Services library survived the April 16th tornado in Nashville. Their building lost 39 windows.

What's New?

Legislative Librarians Service Enhancement Program
by Cheryl Jackson, Virginia Division of Legislative Services

The Southern Legislative Conference (SLC) of the Council of State Governments has begun the Legislative Librarians Service Enhancement Program. The program was initially developed "as a constantly evolving program that reflects the changing needs and technology within legislative libraries." Participants serve as either host library or visiting librarian; SLC pays travel and lodging for the visitor. Late last summer, SLC sent questionnaires to member libraries and attached a sample agenda for a visit of either three or five days. After completing and returning the questionnaire, I received a call saying that my request to visit the Texas LRL matched their desire to be a host library, and the rest was history! I "exchanged" to the Texas LRL Wednesday, November 12 through Friday, November 14, 1997.

Nancy Quesada and I worked closely in planning the trip and then on the actual visit. We were able to customize SLC's proposed agenda to meet my learning and their teaching desires. I asked to find out about the following: general orientation of LRL, reference desk/computer services, cataloging system, LRL publications, collection development, orientations/training sessions for legislators and staff, session services and activities, services for the public, needs assessments/user surveys, budget development and accountability, personnel management and polices, and internet management. Sally, Nancy Q, Rona, Robert, Courtney and Nance Hays all generously donated their time in demonstrating their areas of expertise and answering my myriad questions.

The Texas LRL varies greatly in its services from those offered in the Virginia LRL. Specifically, Texas combines duties (or portions thereof) performed by four agencies in Virginia. First, of course, are the legislative history/reference questions handled by all legislative reference libraries. Second, as they are a depository library for state documents, they are similar in function to the Government Documents section of the state library. They also answer current bill status questions, which in Virginia are handled by Legislative Information (an office of the House Clerk). Finally, library staff updates the LIS themselves, which is done here by our Division of Legislative Automated Systems. So while Texas has a much bigger library (and budget) than Virginia's, the services they perform are much broader in scope. Our main focus is on meeting the information needs and providing research assistance to members of the General Assembly and their staffs, our staff (DLS), and other legislative staffs. We offer very few services for members of the public.

Our library will benefit in many ways from the exchange program to Texas. First, I was able to get an in-depth look at their cataloging system, TINLAW, which we've been considering purchasing. Thanks to the demonstrations, I am already planning reports we can run using the statistics it stores to increase budget tracking, purchasing histories, and circulation data. Second, the classification system devised by a former Texas librarian for classifying government documents is extremely useful and easily adaptable to other libraries with many agency reports. It is based on material content and author more than subject matter.

Another inspiring feature is outreach services the librarians offer to members of the legislature. They are proactive in sending materials out to the members, rather than waiting for a request. At this point, our library publications (e.g., acquisitions list, internet resource list) are distributed to only legislative agencies and are made available to members. We may consider altering our mailing list to initially include members. Finally, I learned a lot by talking with Sally about the library's budget. I got ideas for expenditure tracking and accountability and methods for forecasting the next year's budget.
The program offered by SLC is a great experience. For me, it was two and a half days of nonstop learning, getting and sharing ideas and brainstorming. The staff in Texas is incredible—they are a highly professional, well-trained, friendly group of people. We have already implemented several changes in our library as a result of the visit, and I will forever have a yardstick by which to measure our services. I am anxious to now be a host library and encourage each legislative library to contact SLC or CSG for information on participation. It really is worth the time and effort and will undoubtedly bring long-term benefits.

from Marilyn Cathcart
Randi Madisen, Minnesota LRL reference librarian, and her husband recently had their second child, David Madisen White. All are doing well. Randi will be on leave until early June.

from Marilyn Guttrumson, South Dakota


Done by NCSL’s fiscal affairs and has an appendix summary of state activities.

from Marianne Reiff, Washington, D.C., State Services Organization Library
We just get our new library catalog loaded and searchable on the web. The URL is: http://www.sso.org/library.htm
Take a look. Information about the new catalog appeared in an article in the What’s New? column, winter issue of Newsline.

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Thanks to all of the staff section members who submitted columns and information for this issue. We welcome your ideas and submissions. Newsline is published four times annually by the Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section of NCSL and is edited and formatted by Rita Thaemert.
STAFF SECTION REGIONAL COORDINATORS
Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section

COORD. JENNIFER BERNIER (CT)
(203) 240-8888 (203) 240-8881 Fax
Connecticut
Maine
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
New York
Rhode Island
Vermont

COORD. CLARE CHOLIK (SD)
(605) 773-3251 (605) 773-4576 Fax
Iowa
Minnesota
Montana
Nebraska
North Dakota
South Dakota
Wyoming

COORD. TRACEY KIMBALL (NM)
(505) 986-4600 (505) 986-4610 Fax
Arizona
Colorado
Kansas
New Mexico
Oklahoma
Texas
Utah

COORD. JENNIFER BOTEILER (ID)
(208) 334-4822 (208) 334-2125 Fax
Alaska
California
Hawaii
Idaho
Nevada
Oregon
Washington

COORD. EDDIE WEEKS (TN)
(615) 741-5816 (615) 741-1146 Fax
Alabama
Arkansas
Florida
Georgia
Louisiana
Mississippi
Tennessee

COORD. MARIAN ROGERS (WI)
(608) 266-2824 (608) 266-5648 Fax
Illinois
Indiana
Kentucky
Michigan
Missouri
Ohio
Wisconsin

COORD. JOYCE GRIMES (SC)
(803) 734-2145 (803) 734-2425 Fax
Delaware
Maryland
New Jersey
North Carolina
Pennsylvania
South Carolina
Virginia
West Virginia