Vol. XXVI No. 2

Chair's Column
by Nan Bowers, Nevada
LRL Chair

Welcome to the summer edition of the 2001 Newsline. The newsletter this quarter includes summaries of LRL sponsored sessions at the NCSL Annual Meeting, LRL members' reports from NCSL executive committee, news from the states, and a tribute to one of our own, Beth Furbush.

As this is my first month as LRL chair, I would like to introduce myself and tell you a little about how and why I came to be involved in the Legislative Research Librarians staff section.

My name is Nan Bowers, Legislative Librarian, Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau. When I began work with the Bureau over 10 years ago, I came from a state library (AZ), a public library (TX), and a school library (WA) background. In my first months in Nevada heading a small, special library, I missed having daily contact with librarians familiar with materials, questions, and procedures of similar libraries. Then I discovered the Legislative Research Librarians group. I was contacted by my regional coordinator who gave me a wonderful overview of NCSL and the LRL staff section. I read the newsletter and began attending the fall professional development programs.

I learned that legislative libraries come in all sizes, whether in staffing, collections, or services. There are many bright, innovative people in the group, and all are willing to lend a hand. Now my staff checks the acquisition lists of several legislative libraries that are posted on the NCSL website as part of the LRL homepage, participates in the listserv, circulates Newsline, and attends the annual LRL professional development seminars. The Bureau recognizes the value of our library and appreciates our professionalism, and NCSL and LRL are part of our success.

The 2001 LRL Professional Development Seminar is fast approaching. The Richmond meeting, a joint meeting with the Research and Committee staff section, has a 'leadership' theme. There will be sessions on leadership in law libraries, small team leadership, communication style, knowledge management, tours of Lexis Law Publishing, Monticello, Library of Virginia, Virginia Capitol, and optional Saturday trip to Colonial Williamsburg. Meeting and sharing information with colleagues is a primary benefit of the seminar. Brochures have been mailed out; if you need another one, contact NCSL, check out the website, or contact me. If your institution is not supportive of your travel time and/or expenses, one of our veteran PDS attendees would gladly speak with a supervisor about the professional benefits.

I close with a personal note on my sadness and regret at the recent death of Beth Furbush, the Montana legislative librarian. She was an excellent librarian and exceptionally warm and caring person. I always looked forward to seeing her at the PDS meetings—her sparkling eyes, quick smile, soft voice and halo of gray hair were the perfect introduction to her lively personality. The world is a little colder without you, Beth.

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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: Nan Bowers, Legislative Research Library, Nevada
NCSL Staff: Rita Thaemert
LRL at Annual Meeting

Writing for the Legislature: Write So They’ll Read It!

Saturday, August 11 1:00-2:24 pm

by Clare Cholik, South Dakota

The first session sponsored by LRL at Annual Meeting featured Leita Hart, a professional trainer from Austin, Texas, who conducts courses on presentation skills and was formerly an auditor and communications specialist with the Texas State Auditor’s Office. Using her legislative experience, Ms. Hart provided tips on how to communicate in writing in the legislative environment.

She began by outlining the criteria for good business writing. Good business writing achieves its purpose, engages the reader, is clear, and enjoyable to read. Brevity is crucial, in most cases, if you want to get your message across to the reader. Place the most important information first, and focus the writing on the reader and not the writer. Always keep in mind that no one is going to care as much about what you write as you do.

The four stages of writing include planning, drafting, editing, and formatting. A good way to plan is to get your thoughts on paper using mind mapping. This is accomplished by writing your idea in the center of a blank page and circling it. Around the circle, write down anything that comes to mind about the idea and circle each item you write. Then you can group similar items together, eliminate items that are unnecessary, and put the items in order of importance to develop your outline.

If you’ve done sufficient planning, the drafting stage will go quickly. When drafting, do not evaluate your work. Leave that for the editing phase. If you are editing your own work, wait at least a day after drafting. When editing, read your work from beginning to end without a pen in hand. Then, begin to read each paragraph and highlight the main point of each. Edit for readability with your reader in mind. Finally, move to the formatting stage. Enhance your writing by breaking the text into short paragraphs and using meaningful headings and subheadings. Remember that most readers are not likely to read large blocks of text.

Communicating Effectively in a Changing Legislative Environment

Speaker: Dr. John Daly, Department of Communications Studies, University of Texas Saturday, August 11 3:00 – 5:00 pm

by David Harrell, Oregon

Dr. Daly shared his thoughts on being an effective communicator with a roomful of attentive listeners. His high energy and humor-packed delivery held the interest of all attendees. He believes a person’s perceived competency is determined by how well that person communicates. To that end, he shared his six skills of a good communicator.

➢ Be responsive. You need not agree but you must seem understanding—tell people what you can do, not what you cannot do—empathize—explain—offer alternatives.
➢ Be a storyteller. For example, your family is nothing less than a collection of stories. Be quick, have a point, reflect values, use vivid detail to help people “see” the story.
➢ Become “face” sensitive. Face refers to those things we hold near and dear to ourselves. If you step on the face of someone, they will remember it, might become resistant to the obvious, and can create grudge matches.
➢ Be persuasive. People will ignore data in favor of vivid instances. Explain benefits before features. Always offer two examples of every concept.
➢ Be informative. Deliver the point of your message at the beginning or end but never in the middle. Ask rather than force.
➢ Be sophisticated in the way you deal with people. Never say nice to meet you, instead say nice to see you, avoid potential embarrassment. Be optimistic. Label things positively rather than negatively. Example: A plane has an incredibly rough landing that horrifies the passengers. The oxygen masks drop down and items fall out of the overhead storage bins. As the plane taxis toward the terminal, an attendant comes on the intercom and says “Folks, that wasn’t the pilot’s fault, that wasn’t the attendant’s fault, that was the asphalt.”

If you ever have the opportunity to hear Dr. Daly, don’t miss it.
Delivery of Legal Information via the Web

Sunday, August 12, 4:15 - 5:30 pm
by Robbie LaFleur, Minnesota

"Capital Concepts for Legislative Web sites" were described in this NCSL session sponsored by the Legislative Research Librarians staff section. Cheryl Nyberg, a reference librarian at the University of Washington Law School, gave a thorough, practical, example-filled talk on key features for a great state legislative Web site. In her opinion, legislatures as a whole do a better job of delivering legal information on the Web than the other two branches of government.

A link to the presentation and a list of the featured Web sites can be found on the American Association of Law Libraries' Access to Electronic Legal Information Web page, at: http://www.aallnet.org/committee/aelic/news.html.
I'll just mention a few points of interest.

As you would expect from a librarian, much of her analysis focused on access. Sites should be accessible by citizens with disabilities. Both citizens and professionals search for bills; appropriate search methods for several audiences should be included. Clear information about how citizens can contact the legislature should be included. Versions of bills from past sessions should be retained.

She emphasized several points about good Web site construction in general: such as dates on each page, preferring html presentation over formats that requires additional software, and noting authorship of the information on each page. She also feels that too many legislatures use nonstandard navigation on their Web sites.

She would like to see more extensive legislator information, more links from bill status pages directly to Journal pages, and user surveys for effective feedback. She also made a strong "Death to Disclaimers!!" comment. Citizens have a right to believe that the information found on the Web is current, up-to-date, and reliable.

The session was well attended and well-received. For those of you who were not able to attend, be sure to check out the list of examples at the AALL site noted above. Be inspired.

Tour of the Texas Legislative Reference Library and the Capitol

Dale W. Propp, Director
Penelope Dukes-Williams, Senior Reference Librarian
Monday, August 13, 2:15 - 6:30 pm
by David Harrell, Oregon

As the bus drove down the road through the rolling Texas landscape, I got the feeling this is a big state. When we pulled up to the Capitol building in Austin, I knew we had to be in Texas. The building is the nation's largest state capitol. It must be one of the most beautiful as well.

Through the massive doors with hinges bearing a Texas inscription. Past portraits of previous governors. Over terrazzo tiled floors. Under the incredible dome. Past paintings of The Battle of San Jacinto and The Alamo. You knew you are enjoying a building bestowed with history, you knew you were in a state rich in history, proud and strong and vast.

As steeped in history as the original building is, the recently completed expansion is indeed forward thinking. Built underground with offices that surround open space covered with skylights, a very special space has been created. Unobtrusive if not invisible from ground level outside, the space is creative and functional inside. It is beautiful in every detail.

As might be expected, one of the jewels of the Capitol is the Legislative Reference Library. The library occupies a wonderful, beautifully restored and maintained space that is flooded with natural light streaming through floor to ceiling windows. The library is well staffed with professionals who are knowledgeable and friendly.

The mission of the library is to meet the research and reference needs of legislators, committees and staff, as well as state agencies and the general public when possible. To accomplish that mission, they maintain a collection of Texas documents, other states' statutes, legislative bill files, law reviews, and the other usual suspects. They also provide a daily clipping service with articles from 30 newspapers. Daunting. As you might guess, one of the difficulties is determining how to provide service and access to customers and yet maintain the historical integrity of the space. They have done a wonderful job.
In between our tour of the building and our tour of the library, we enjoyed a reception with library staff. Our friends Nikki Daugherty and Richard Widden from Lexis Law Publishing sponsored the refreshments and were fun to have with us. It is too bad we didn't have more time to enjoy the friendliness of everyone and the beauty of the capitol. If you have a day to spend in Austin, spend it in this wonderful building.

**LRL Business Meeting**

Tuesday, August 14, 12 noon - 1:15 pm  
by Arthur McEnany, Louisiana

The meeting was called to order by chairperson, Johanne Greer, Maryland. Johanne welcomed all attendees, introducing NCSL staff liaison Rita Thaemert and other members of LRL. Johanne also introduced new officers for the coming year, including Nan Bowers, Nevada, chair; Robbie LaFleur, Minnesota, chair-elect; and Arthur McEnany, Louisiana, secretary. She also thanked West Group for sponsoring the Chinese buffet for lunch.

Irene Stone, staff section archivist, presented the LRL photo album, containing pictures of the professional development seminars and Annual Meetings over the years since 1972.

Rita displayed this year's Notable Document Award winners, as well as a packet of library publicity materials that LRL librarians submitted for circulation. She also acknowledged this year's recipients of the Legislative Staff Achievement Awards. Honored were Beth Furbush of Montana as the outstanding librarian of the year and the David Poynter Legislative Research Library of the Louisiana House of Representatives as this year's outstanding library. Susie Carroll of Louisiana accepted the award on behalf of the Poynter Research Library.

Johanne, Nan and Jonetta Douglas of Iowa briefly discussed their Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee work, the details of which will follow in this newsletter.

Joining us for lunch were several members of the LSCC, including the new staff chair, Ramona Kenady of Oregon, and immediate past chair, Diane Bolender of Iowa. Ramona said that one of her immediate priorities was the continued improvement of the NCSL website, and she asked for the LRL's continuing input.

Cheryl Jackson of Virginia welcomed us all to the PDS to be held in Richmond, October 10-13, and hoped that we would all attend.

**Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee**

by Nan Bowers

One of the duties of the NCSL staff chairs and vice chairs is participation in the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee, LSCC. The group meets four times a year and members are assigned to work on a task force. The three task forces this past year included promoting professional development, promoting state legislatures, and promoting NCSL services to legislatures. Task forces provided final reports at Annual Meeting.

**Promoting NCSL Services to Legislatures Task Force**

The technology subcommittee recommended improvements to the NCSL website. Twelve LRL librarians completed a survey on the search function, which contributed to modifications. Changes include adding publication dates for retrieved documents, matching search terms within the same paragraph, selecting documents first that are 12 months old or newer, and placing the search term at the bottom of the results form for easier modification. The task force and NCSL staff will continue to study and recommend improvements to the search and the navigation features.

The technology subcommittee also studied and recommended a pilot program for the bill status and legislation management system. California, Kentucky, Louisiana and Virginia will add data to the system that allows bill tracking by number, sponsor, title, summary and status.

The futures subcommittee provided six recommendations to make futures information accessible to legislatures and a proposed workbook titled "Twelve Keys to a More Productive Future for Your State Legislature."

The final task force subcommittee was charged with evaluating materials and outreach to new legislative members. Recommendations included survey/interview questions to accompany materials and ideas to enhance contact with new legislators.
Task Force on Promoting State Legislatures
by Jonetta Douglas, Iowa

This task force included three subcommittees:
• Children’s Web Sites Guidelines
• Communications Tools
• Civic Education for Young Adults

The subcommittee working on guidelines for children’s web sites reviewed the sites that they could find for each state looking for consistent features that made the sites and educational and fun. They will take these features and put together recommendations that will be made available for other states to use to either start a children’s web page or improve the one they already have.

The communications tools subcommittee has revised an earlier NCSL publication on educating citizens about the legislature. They have trimmed the document down and given it a more positive tone. Karl Kurtz will work on an introduction and it should be ready to either go to print or be posted on the web.

The third subcommittee was charged with promoting civic education for young adults. At the San Antonio meeting they presented a model resolution encouraging election officials to visit high schools in the spring or otherwise to register students to vote in the next election. This model resolution was approved by the full LSCC and then approved by the Executive Committee.

There is also an ongoing project “Legislative Chambers at the Millennium.” This project began as a coffee table book concept and has since evolved in to a web presence. In its current form, each state would have ten web pages to show their chambers at the millennium and highlight any special points about the chambers. Then NCSL would bring this information on line in much the same fashion as the release of the state quarter coins.

As a task force, we started off as most do with many ambitions at the beginning of the 2000-2001 committee year. And though we were not able to complete everything, I think for one year we did pretty well. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the staff section for your support during my term on executive committee. Because of the restrictions concerning people from the same state serving, we have no staff section members currently on executive committee, but I feel confident that we are being well represented by the current officers from the staff section serving on LSCC.

Task Force on Promoting Professional Development for Staff
by Johanne Greer, Maryland

There was a consensus that the Legislative Staff Information Booth needed to be renamed to better reflect its purpose. The new name, which was presented at the San Antonio 2001 Annual Meeting, was “Welcome Center for Legislative Staff” and it did make a difference in the number of relevant visitors. There was a drawing for those who visited the booth and left their business cards. The prize was a mounted state pin collection of all 50 states that NCSL put together in a beautiful frame.

The second phase of the staff recruitment and retention project was reviewed. A survey was sent to legislative managers and directors asking what legislatures are doing from a management perspective to recruit and retain staff. 166 of 400 surveys were returned and an analysis of the data will be reviewed in an article for an upcoming issue of State Legislatures magazine.

A final document of the Self-Assessment Guide for Legislative Staff Managers was presented at the Annual Meeting. The primary means of distribution will be an electronic version via the NCSL Web site in PDF format. The next step of the project will be to add hyperlinks to the electronic document, taking users to other Web sites pertinent to the subject areas in the Self-Assessment Guide.

The final order of business related to technology and NCSL On-line services. It was agreed that the service capabilities of NCSL needed to be better marketed. It was recommended that a future task force work toward this end.

2001 LRL Awards

Notable Document Awards

Special thanks to Deb Priest, Director of the New York Assembly Information Center, for again this year chairing the document awards committee. Also on the committee were Robbie LaFleur, Director of the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library; Sabah Eltareb, California Research Bureau; and Cathy Griffin, Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records. LRL appreciates your dedication and diligence in reviewing documents, setting up categories and choosing the winners.
GUIDES FOR MEMBERS

Orientation Guide for Louisiana House Members, 2000-2004 Term

Quick Guide to Floor Procedure in the Louisiana House of Representatives

State and Local Government in Louisiana: An Overview, 2000-2004 Term

Louisiana House of Representatives, Hon. Charles W. DeWitt Jr., Speaker
for the outstanding corpus of guides for Louisiana legislators

PUBLIC POLICY

Eminent Domain in Montana and Improving the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Process

Montana Legislative Environmental Policy Office, Todd Everts, Director

Shock of the New: Changes in the Generation, Transmission, and Distribution of Electricity in Montana

Montana Legislative Services Division, Lois Menzies, Executive Director

Too Much, Too Little, Too Late: An Assembly Investigation of CONNECTIONS - New York’s Statewide Child Welfare Computer System

New York Assembly Committee on Oversight, Analysis and Investigation, Scott M. Stringer, Chair and Committee on Children and Families, Roger L. Green, Chair

CITIZEN GUIDE

When You Are Concerned: A Guide for Families Concerned About the Safety of an Older Driver

New York State Office for the Aging, Dr. Patricia Pine, Director

Legislative Staff Achievement Awards

These awards are given annually to individual legislative staff members, teams on a project, or legislative staff offices that have demonstrated excellence in supporting the work of a state legislature and strengthening the legislative institution. The 2001 LRL individual award was given to Beth Furbush, Montana. We have devoted the last two pages of this issue of Newsline to Beth. The 2001 LRL staff office award was given to the Louisiana House Library.

David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library of the Louisiana House of Representatives

The Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section recognizes the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library for excellence in service to the Louisiana House of Representatives and to the legislative librarians’ profession. The David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library is an outstanding legislative library in terms of the services provided to the Louisiana Legislature, collection of materials, innovative use of technology, and dedicated staff. The director and staff of the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library have provided support to the LRL Staff Section by attending the conferences and workshops, hosting the Professional Development Seminar for 2000, and making informative presentations to the LRL Staff Section.

Director Suzy Hughes was instrumental in the formation of the Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section in 1972. She secured a National Conference of State Legislatures/National Science Foundation State Science Engineering Technology legislative grant, through which the creation of the Louisiana Government Information Network was facilitated. The library is a leader among legislative libraries in preparing a periodical checklist that provides selective magazine articles of research value to legislative staff and to libraries. These checklists now are incorporated into a Web-based catalog system that is available to all legislative staff online as well as to members when they are in session. The library also has developed a weekly Internet service for members and staff to access current information, including hyperlink connections to research-orientated Web sites, online news articles and Web-based documents in full text.
State News

Louisiana
from Suzie Johnston, David R. Poyer Legislative Research Library

New Library Catalog

This spring the David R. Poyer Legislative Research Library completed installation of its Inmagic catalog. The new catalog is networked to legislators and staff using Inmagic's web publisher. When available, hypertext links are included in catalog records, thereby providing online publications to users on their desktops. Improved search capability and report generation help with research. Best of all, it doesn’t crash as our old catalog once did on the first day of session. Reports to the Legislature Act 26 of the 2001 regular session of the Louisiana Legislature provides for the submission of reports to the legislature to the Poyer Library in print and electronic formats. The act amends current law (L.A.R.S. 24:772), which only required print submission. Electronic versions will allow the library to provide access to reports to the legislature through the Internet on the legislature’s website using the library’s new catalog system, while the print serves the library’s reference and archival needs.

Montana
from Bentley Utgard, Legislative Reference Center

News from the Montana Legislative Reference Center is that Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson has been hired as our new Legislative Librarian. She begins her new job on September 4th.

Lisa comes to us from the State Law Library of Montana, where she’s been the Electronic Services Librarian for the past four years. She holds a B.A. in English (Concordia College, 1988); a J.D. (U. of North Dakota 1996), and a Master of Library and Information Science (U. of Washington, 1997), that includes a certificate in law librarianship.

We are very happy to welcome her aboard.

As you may know, Beth Furbush, who held the position from 1989 to June 2001 passed away August 18th of metastatic colon cancer. Beth’s strength, generosity, and exemplary work continue to inspire us.

Nebraska
from Peg Jones, Legislative Reference Library

News from the Nebraska Legislative Reference Library

Our reference library is part of the Legislative Research Division, which employs 14 full-time staff members. Our library is a “small shop” with two full time staff serving approximately 200 legislative employees. On average, we respond to over 40 library requests per month from senators and legislative staff.

This past session and interim we found ourselves immersed in the Legislature’s 2001 redistricting effort. The Legislature asked the Legislative Research Division to provide legal, administrative, and GIS support for redistricting. Two GIS support staff were hired, but the rest of the division staff was recruited to help, including the library staff. The library staff support included scheduling and clerking committee meetings and arranging a public hearing, which was broadcast to eight remote sites via Nebraska’s Video Conferencing Network. We also organized and cataloged the many documents generated during redistricting for historical purposes. All in all, redistricting went well for the Legislature and all plans were completed without the need to call a special session.

The odds are growing, though, that the senators will return to Lincoln for a budget-cutting special session in October to address a revenue shortfall. Tax receipts have fallen below projections for four of the past five months and if receipts continue to drop the odds of a special session increase. Nebraska’s Constitution does not permit deficit spending and the Legislature passed a balanced biennial budget before adjourning in early June. Because we are just a few months into the first year of the biennial budget, a special session now would allow budget cuts to be spread over two budget years instead of requiring deeper cuts in the second year of the two-year budget period.

We are now in the middle of the interim, for which we are appreciative, because it gives us time to reorganize the library shelves and assess our collection of periodicals and reference material. If the anticipated special session occurs, our interim catch-up time will be over in October and we will focus on library requests related to the special session and the regular session scheduled to begin in early January of 2002.
Wisconsin from Marian, Rogers, Legislative Reference Bureau

The Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. An article about the Bureau's history and about the Theobald Legislative Library (along with a staff photo) can be found in the July/August 2001 (no.6) Channel DLS newsletter, page 14
http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dlctl/eis/chnvvol36.html

A message to the LRL listserv in early August announced the availability of LRBCAT, the library's new web-based catalog. LRBCAT can be reached through the Library Services section of the Bureau's home page http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lrb/ or by going directly to http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lrb/catalog.

LRBCAT offers simple yet precise means for searching the library's collection. Catalog records include direct links to publications available in full-text elsewhere on the Internet, when these links are available. LRBCAT users can also view a "New Books" list that is updated monthly, use the catalog to check the status of items they have borrowed, renew their loan periods, place holds on items they wish to borrow, and send requests or messages to library staff. At this time access for Internet users is erratic, so if you find the catalog is unavailable, try again later.

LRL and RACSS Joint Professional Development Seminar
Richmond, Virginia
The Omni Hotel Richmond
October 10 - 13, 2001

LRL Draft Agenda

Wednesday, October 10, 2001
3:00-5:00 p.m. Registration (Omni Hotel)
5:30-7:30 p.m. Reception and Tour at the Virginia State Capitol
(sponsored by West Group)

Thursday, October 11, 2001
8:00 - 9:00 am. Continental Breakfast
Welcome and Announcements
9:00-11:15 a.m. Joint Plenary: Work Styles: Insight into Self and Others

Speaker: Dr. Susan Wilkes, Virginia Workplace Initiatives

11:30-1:00 p.m. bus trip to Charlottesville
(box lunches, courtesy of LEXIS Law Publishing)

1:00-3:15 p.m. Joint program and tour at LEXIS Law Publishing

3:30-5:30 p.m. Tour of Monticello
(admission courtesy of LEXIS Law Publishing)

6:00-8:15 p.m. Group Dinner at the Ivy Inn, Charlottesville

8:15-9:15 p.m. buses return to Richmond

Friday, October 12, 2001
8:00-8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast
8:30-9:45 a.m. Joint Plenary: When Leadership Counts
Speaker: Ron Carrier, JMU

10:00-11:45 a.m. LRL workshop--Leadership: What Lies Within?
Speaker: Gail Warren, VA State Law Library

11:45-1:00 p.m. Joint Plenary Luncheon
Speaker: Ramona Kenady, Oregon, 2001 NCSL Staff Chair

1:30-3:00 p.m. RACSS & LRL tours:
Library of Virginia or Division of Forensic Science

3:30-5:00 p.m. LRL--Knowledge Management
Speaker: Donna Scheeder, Congressional Research Services
evening LRL and RACSS will both hold informal Dutch Treat dinners

Saturday, October 13, 2001
8:00-8:30 a.m. Buffet Breakfast
9:00-11:00 a.m. LRL--Business Meeting and Evaluations
12:30-8:30 p.m. Optional Social Event: Colonial Williamsburg
NCSL Publications

All NCSL publications listed here are available from the Marketing Department at 303/830-2200.

BOOKS

Promising Practices Issue Brief: Community Based Long-Term Care
School Violence--Sharing Student Information Legislative Internship Opportunities Web Paper SCHIP Report on 1115 Waivers

STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment, Vol.26, No.7

LEGISBRIEFS

A Healthy Beach is Good for the Economy, Vol. 9, No.31
States Grapple with Nurse Shortages, Vol.9, No.32
International Trade of New Agricultural Products from Biotechnology, Vol.9, No.33
School Attendance Policies, Vol.9, No.34
HIV Testing of Inmates, Vol.9, No.35
Wetlands Protection, Vol.9, No.36

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

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH LIBRARIANS

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NCSL Staff: Rita Thaemert
Beth Furbush

[This is a note to Beth written by Marilyn Johnson in early June to be read at Beth's ice cream retirement party.]

Beth,

Your friends from the Legislative Research Librarians Section of the National Conference of State Legislatures greet you. Collectively they believe ice cream is good for what ails you.

As you leave the Montana Legislative Reference Center Library to concentrate on defeating the tumors, LRL sends thoughts and prayers your way. Now you know these folk. So stand back for when they decide to act as a group things happen.

For a dozen years you have been making good things happen in Montana and nationally. Over time, one question about you keeps surfacing in LRL: where does the woman get all that energy?

Once, you know, you nearly did in a group of legislative librarians by racing them through Denver at night to get to a premier fish restaurant. Clue one should have been: fish restaurant in Denver? Next clue: hiking boots. Nobody understood the significance of your laced up footwear until they tried following your lead across town in the dark underneath a train bridge.

The screams from the underpass as much as the three mile twenty minute "walk" made you an LRL legend. The evening under your command became even more memorable when the exhausted group discovered the restaurant was just three blocks from their hotel with intact sidewalks and street lighting. And anyway what kind of weird restaurant serves the black scum off the bottom of barrels in which fish from Korea soak for flavor?

When you weren't "fishing" around for restaurants, you were modernizing the Montana legislative library. You automated, then automated, then updated. Your online acquisition and periodical lists remain best LRL sellers. You even decided not only to keep the lines of communication open with the Legislative Services Division technology planners but also to improve them. Geez, you may have gone for the edge there.

You are not just a survivor but a beacon of courage. We know that because you lived through and came out stronger after what we all dread: legislative branch reorganization. And you moved during the Capitol renovation. Say, did it occur to you you're leaving too late? The move is over!

Your counterparts around the country know you as a mover too from your efforts to improve and update the LRL. They saw you working on the Core Collection Committee, developing a recommended resource list for legislative libraries. They know you from your work on the Librarians Helping Librarians Committee, producing contacts for LRL in various fields of expertise. They remember you worked on the Notable Documents Award Committee, giving national recognition for outstanding legislative reference materials.

In the olden days they found you working as a star indexer for NCSL's LEGISNET database. They can read evidence of your work as the LRL Section Secretary. Are you picking up the work that threads its way through the list? WORK. Go home, Beth, and embrace the work of healing just as you gave your energies and commitment to your profession and your legislative librarian colleagues.

Your LRL friends will stay in touch as you know by the notes, cards, e-mails, and flowers coming your way. They know where you get your energy--from a source of enduring passion for all things that lie in the path you hike.

Just one other thing...You've lived a long time in Montana without hiding guns in the mountains or writing bogus checks to the government. That's a good thing.
Elaborate Furbush, Librarian for the Montana Legislative Reference Center

The Legislative Librarians' Staff Section recognizes Elizabeth Furbush, librarian for the Montana Legislative Reference Center, in recognition of her contributions to the profession, the staff section, NCSSL and the Montana Legislature. LRL acknowledges her numerous years of service in providing information and reference assistance, research, publications and general aid to Montana legislators and legislative staff.

Beth has been especially supportive of the LRL staff section through participation on committees and acting as current secretary. Her efforts as an LRL officer were exemplary, and her involvement in conference calls and producing excellent minutes all through the year is greatly admired. Beth has exhibited an active commitment to increasing resources for and expanding services to the state's legislators, legislative services division staff, and the researching public. She automated the basic library collection, adding periodicals, newspapers and memo indexes. Her dedication to her profession has extended to involvement with the Legislative Librarians Research Section of NCSSL. She also has been a member of the Core Collection Committee, the Librarians Helping Librarians Committee, the Notable Documents Award Committee and the LEGISNET Indexing Committee, providing article citations to NCSSL for entry in its initial data base.

[Beth's obituary in the Helena Independent Record on Tuesday, August 21, 2001]


She graduated summa cum laude from Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa., in 1969 and received a master of library science degree from the University of California at Berkeley in 1971.

In 1977, Beth married Harry Houze in McLean, Va. They moved to Helena, Mont., in 1983 and to Helena in 1986. They have two daughters, Kelda, of Boulder, Colo., and Jocelyn, of Portland, Ore.

In Helena, Beth worked as a library technician in the Office of Public Instruction, as reference librarian for Coretta Library of Carroll College and for the last 12 years as the legislative librarian for the State of Montana.

Beth was a member of many organizations including the Montana Women's Chorus and the Big Sky Unitarian Universalist Fellowship as well as a number of professional organizations.

She is survived by her husband, Harry G. Houze; daughters, Kelda Furbush and Jocelyn Furbush; her brother, Spencer Furbush of Piffard, N.Y.; and her parents, Richard and Eleanor Furbush of Helena.

Cremation has taken place and a memorial service will be held in the Forum Room at the Waterford, 916 Saddle Dr., at 11 a.m. on Aug. 25, 2001.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to a charity of one's choice.