CHAIR’S COLUMN
by Nancy Quesada, TX
LRL Chairperson

I look forward to serving as our staff section Chairperson this year, and I thank you all for this opportunity. I will work to do my best, and I hope that you will help me as we work together for the good of our staff section. Please contact me with your comments, suggestions, and ideas for our staff section as a whole, and especially your ideas for programs and projects.

Thank you, Debbie Tavenner, for your hard work and wise counsel as our 1994-1995 Chairperson. I will miss hearing your calm, measured voice during our officers’ conference calls. Debbie will still help us with the Newsline, as she has graciously agreed to continue compiling the information from the Coordinators’ Corner.

Thank you, Clare Cholik, for your dedication and service “above and beyond the call of duty” as our 1995-1996 Chairperson. I promise that I will continue to rely on you this year for your help! Congratulations to Jonetta Douglas, as our Chair-Elect, and welcome to Anne Rottmann, as our Secretary. I know that I can count on you for the coming year.

This issue of Newsline has the summaries for the Annual Meeting. Our staff section was quite active at the meeting, and sessions were informative and well received. There was standing room only at the program “Legislatures on the World Wide Web,” which we co-sponsored. Two members of our staff section served as panelists on conference-wide programs. Lynda Davis, Maryland, was a panelist for “Legislative Staff Working as A Team,” and Marilyn Cathcart, Minnesota, was a panelist on “Legislatures on the World Wide Web,” which was tape-recorded. They each did a great job and highlighted our work as legislative research librarians. Thanks, Lynda and Marilyn!

I also look forward to seeing you all at the Professional Development Seminar. We will focus on the use of technology at the Congressional Research Service, the Government Printing Office, and attend briefings at the Maryland Department of Legislative Reference in Annapolis. You won’t want to miss this seminar, so make your plans early to attend. Don’t let the early Sept. 16 deadline for hotel reservations sneak up on you! Hope to see you in Washington!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR
October 17-19
Washington, D.C.

The brochure/registration form was mailed August 6. If you did not get one or want another one, please call Rita at (303) 830-2200. On the agenda are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair’s Column</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Meeting Programs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News From the States</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting in Botswana</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCSL Publications</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Section Regional Coordinators</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH LIBRARIANS STAFF SECTION
of the National Conference of State Legislatures
1560 Broadway, Suite 700, Denver, CO 80202 303/830-2200

Chairperson: Nancy Quesada, Librarian, Legislative Reference Library, Texas
NCSL Staff: Jo Anne Bourquard and Rita Thaemert
• Visit and briefing about electronic services and sources at Congressional Research Service
• Visit and briefing about the electronic services and sources at the Government Printing Office
• Discussion of state legislatures' uses of the Internet and other electronic sources
• Discussion of legislative libraries contributions to the legislative process
• Visit and briefing at the Annapolis, Maryland Legislative Library and Information Services

Nancy Quesada is helping to match roommates. If you would like to share a room at The Holiday Inn on the Hill, please call Nancy at (512) 463-1252. Please note that the hotel reservation deadline is September 16. Meeting registration deadline is October 1.

ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAMS

Minutes of Legislative Research Librarians' Business Meeting
Monday, July 29
by Sally Reynolds, TX

Meeting was called to order at 3:20 p.m. by Clare Cholik, Chair of the LRL Staff Section. She suggested that although we all knew everyone, it would be appropriate to introduce ourselves. The following persons were in attendance: Clare Cholik, Chair; Nancy Quesada, Chair-Elect; Debbie Tavenner, Immediate Past Chair; Lynda Davis, Susan Sternberg; Susan Gilley; Marilyn Cathcart; Sally Reynolds; Cheryl Jackson; Rita Thaemert and Jo Anne Bourquard from NCSL and Donna Schedder from Congressional Research Service.

Clare discussed the fact that Chris Pattarozzi was no longer with NCSL and had prepared a Certificate of Appreciation for her work with our staff section. We all unanimously concurred with the certificate and also signed a card that Clare had brought.

Julie McCown, Tennessee Legislative Librarian has retired and her replacement is Eddie Weeks. He has stated that he is going to have to catalog the entire book collection and requested guidance from NCSL. Rita faxed him selected pages from the Skills Bank document.

Clare announced that Tracy Kimball with the New Mexico Legislative Council Service has graciously agreed to host our 1997 Professional Development Seminar in Santa Fe.

The Chair then proceeded with the election of officers. The candidates were: Nancy Quesada, Chair; Jonetta Douglas, Chair-Elect; and Anne Rottmann, Secretary. The candidates were unanimously elected.

Nancy then discussed the Professional Development Seminar in Washington, DC, October 17-19. She noted that this meeting will focus on technology. Copies of the registration brochure were distributed.

The next item of discussion was the creation of the Notable Documents Award. A copy of the committee report was presented. It was decided that up to five (5) awards a year could be presented starting in 1997. It was suggested that it be put in the next newsletter and that Marilyn Guttromson and Deborah Priest would be on the selection committee.

Then discussion turned to the Legislative Staff Achievement Award, created by NCSL's Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee. The award is to be presented to deserving staff at the next Annual Meeting of NCSL. Marilyn Cathcart suggested that we establish a task force to determine selection guidelines.

The next item on the agenda was the distribution of NCSL publications. Clare discussed the fact that some libraries were still having problems receiving publications. The format of many publications is changing and the question was raised, in what format do libraries want to receive publications? Marilyn C. brought up the problem of getting books in an electronic format only. Jo Anne stated that NCSL will continue to furnish legislative librarians books in paper format. Lynda Davis suggested that this would be a good topic for debate.

There was a brief discussion on the claim form for hard copy publications from NCSL. Some librarians stated that they had had good success with using the forms and others stated that they have not used them. Rita and Jo Anne stressed the importance of letting them know when we were having difficulty receiving publications.

Debbie Tavenner reported on the Automation Survey. As of the meeting she had received 30 responses and would be compiling the results soon. Rita said that 35 copies of the LRL Guide to Legislative Intent had
been sold. Everyone seemed very pleased and feel that his number will continue to grow.

Susan Sternberg suggested that the librarians might like to go to Trenton, New Jersey sometime in the future. She stated that there was a new librarian, Ingrid Hernquirst, who was interested in becoming involved with the staff section.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m., followed by a reception sponsored by Michie Company.

Tour of the St. Louis Mercantile Library
Tuesday, July 30, 1996
by Nancy Quesada

The St. Louis Mercantile Library, located in downtown St. Louis, and established in 1846 by business leaders, is the oldest library west of the Mississippi. The library was, and is, funded by private subscriptions, but it is open to the public, and provides research facilities and reference services to its members and the general public.

When the library was established one hundred and fifty years ago, it was the cultural center for the city. It was the library, the home of the historical society, and had the largest lecture hall in town. The lecture hall could hold two thousand people, and it was filled to capacity when Jenny Lind, Mark Twain, or Ralph Waldo Emerson came to town.

The general collection has some 300,000 titles and is closed stack. The library currently uses a paper-based card catalog, but is investigating an automated computer-based catalog.

The library also has several special collections, mainly focusing on transportation, and the opening of the American West. Examples of special collections are the Inland Waterways (covering barges, riverboats, paddlewheels, and steamships); National Railroads; and River Life and Lore.

Another special collection is the complete photograph and clippings files of the local newspaper, the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, covering 135 years. This collection has over 10,000,000 clippings (folded and filed in 5"x8" envelopes), and 350,000 historical photographs. One of the envelopes, for example, has the original newspaper clippings from the 1857 Dred Scott Supreme Court case, initially argued in St. Louis. The library is currently optically scanning its collection of photographs, which will preserve the images and make them more accessible to researchers.

The professional, friendly staff conducted an exceptionally informative tour, and the Mercantile Library is well worth visiting in St. Louis.

The Merger of West and Thomson Publishers
Robert Owens, West Publishing Company
Speaker at the Staff Section Luncheon
Tuesday, July 30
by Nancy Quesada

Robert Owens, Editor-in-Chief of West Publishing, updated our staff section on the recent merger of West Publishing and the Thomson Corp. The new name will be West Information Publishing Group (WIPG).

The merger of these two publishers is the latest in a recent series of mergers, with most mergers pairing American publishers with international publishers. The new company will pair the well-known West legal publishers with Thomson, which is the tenth-largest college textbook publisher and a well-known international publisher of scientific and medical journals. The new company will offer six thousand on-line databases, covering education, business, financial, and newspaper information. The company will also offer CD-ROMs of the statutes of forty-nine states (with Hawaii soon to follow), and the statutes for twenty-three states in book format.

The most important concern for us is what this merger will mean for the customers. Mr. Owens, who will remain as West's Editor-in-Chief, reassured us that it means business as usual, for now. The U.S. Dept. of Justice reviewed and approved the merger in June. As a result, some Thomson products will have to be divested, but not any West products. Some products, especially those which will be divested, will have separate billing, and some states will have to terminate their contracts and re-bid them. The "brand" names that we are familiar with will stay the same.

The merger will integrate West's primary law and Thomson's secondary law publications. An example would be West's California statutes and Thomson's California case law on one CD-ROM. Hypertext could link ALR, AmJur and Westlaw. For now, the company plans to keep the Lawdesk (Folio) and Westlaw (Premise) CD-ROM separate and to maintain both. Eventually, these will be integrated to a central system for billing and customer service. The current high level of customer service will be maintained and will not be sacrificed in the merger of West and Thomson.
LEGISNET on the Internet and the Old Nets
Tuesday, July 30
by Clare Cholik, SD

On Tuesday afternoon, Bob Frohling of NCSL's On-Line Services Program provided the staff section with a brief history of LEGISNET. He described its origin and how it has evolved over the years. Most importantly, he highlighted the changes that are currently taking place. The LEGISNET Information Retrieval System is now available on the Internet. It is accessible at http://www.ncsl.org/plweb. The system is now in a test phase, but will eventually be password protected so that only legislators and legislative staff may utilize it.

Once work is complete, the new system will contain the same information it has in the past. All the information will be available in full text. NCSL staff members are no longer preparing abstracts of the documents. There is a possibility, however, that future enhancements of the system will include software that will do the abstracting automatically.

The system supports natural language searching as well as enhanced Boolean searching. There are no plans to update the LEGISNET Index. Rather, the system relies on the Legislative Indexing Vocabulary compiled by the Congressional Research Service. Search results are highlighted and ranked by relevancy, and users have the ability to limit the number of documents retrieved.

Use of the system is fairly self-explanatory and requires little, if any, training. A quick guide to its use is forthcoming. Mr. Frohling encourages anyone with questions surrounding the LEGISNET Information Retrieval System to contact him at the NCSL office in Denver.

Legislatures on the World Wide Web
Wednesday, July 31
by Clare Cholik

This session was a panel discussion moderated by Bill Behnk, California Legislative Information Systems. Panelists included Marilyn Cathcart, Minnesota Legislative Reference Library; Max Arinder, Mississippi Joint Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review; and Larry Barish, Wisconsin Reference and Library Services.

Approximately 35 states currently have a presence on the Internet. Panelists discussed many issues legislative staff face as they create and maintain legislative Web sites. In Minnesota, the Legislative Reference Library is actively involved in putting information out on the Internet. Marilyn Cathcart said there are ten librarians in the library who devote time to this project. They have taken on the challenge with enthusiasm and enjoy their new roles as technologists. Their Web site contains a unique link entitled, "Links to the World." It provides access to Internet sites on about 40 different topics. The librarians evaluate the sites and include only those they deem valuable to the legislative audience. Marilyn indicated that they strive to make their Web site as uniform and user-friendly as possible. Those who add the information to the Web site are responsible for maintaining it.

Marilyn pointed to several lessons they have learned along the way. One is that there are always costs associated with this type of endeavor, and they have devoted a lot of staff and work time to it. Another is that some data is now available only on the Internet. If a librarian, for instance, wants the information, he or she must know how to access it and make decisions regarding distribution of the material to patrons. Also, those developing a Web site must be willing to take risks. There are a lot of difficult choices involved. Lastly, Marilyn encouraged people not to be afraid of new technology. She noted that creating and maintaining Web sites is easier than one might think.

Max Arinder also stressed the relative ease of developing a Web site. He indicated it was a "short step" to get his PEER Committee on the Web. Executive summaries of all their reports are now accessible through the Web, and their newest reports are available in full text.

Larry Barish explained that the Wisconsin Legislature took its first step by putting printed materials on the Internet. In addition, they developed two working groups of legislative staff to work on this emerging technology. One group focuses on the policy issues involved in developing a Web site and the other works on the actual content of the sites. There are two legislative service agencies in Wisconsin, and each of them will have its own Web site.

Larry discussed some of the problems associated with using the Internet as a research tool. One problem is that often the appearance of a Web site takes precedence over its actual content. Therefore, a Web site that looks very enticing may not have the level of content the researcher expects. Also, the quality of
the information available is variable, and there is so much out there that the researcher never really knows what he or she is missing. In addition, statistics show that only a small percentage of individuals has access to the Internet, so the targeted audience is comparatively small. Lastly, the Web lacks an archival function. Thus, what is here today may be gone tomorrow. Due to these problems, Larry suggested the best use of the Internet is as a supplement rather than a replacement for traditional resources.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN DOCUMENT PRESERVATION
Wednesday, July 31
by Debbie Tavenner

Presentation by Kenneth Winn, Director, Missouri State Archives and Loralee J. Bloom, Electronic Records Archivist, Missouri, both from of the Secretary of State's office.

Mr. Winn opened the session with some general remarks about optical technology, and Ms. Bloom presented information on preservation concerns relating to optical technology. According to Mr. Winn, optical technology has great risks, but offers numerous positive benefits for accessibility and retrieval of information, and that is why Missouri State Archives ventured into optical technology. The archives have 40,000 cubic feet "under control," but another 60,000 cubic feet of materials are "not so well processed." He asserts that modern documentation causes the creation of more and more paper to manage and archives have a huge problem to save just one percent of what is created.

It took 72 hours for the Missouri State Archives to find materials relating to Clarence Thomas, but had the materials been part of those saved in an optical medium, the materials could have been available in a matter of minutes. Misfiling is also never a problem in the optical world, and it also magically solves space problems. He noted, however, the box a staffer uses for an ottoman will disappear. Before entering into a process using optical technology he suggests analyzing your needs and seeking advice from legal staff and records managers.

At the end of his presentation he mentioned that many small counties in Missouri are starting optical technology projects. The financial costs are within the reach of many agencies which several years ago thought it impossible. Equipment leasing in some cases is making it affordable.

Ms. Bloom began her presentation by warning that optical disk technology is often touted as a cure all, but there is no reason to believe it will eliminate paper. Archiving is the equivalent of offline storage. The biggest problems for optical systems are the lack of industry standards for longevity or any guaranty of access for long periods. There is no permanent medium for digital information that can guarantee continued accessibility. Sony is advertising a century disk, but it is very dangerous to rely on the claim. She cautions to make sure digitized information is in a live environment and that it migrates to the next generation. Disks may survive, but the information on the disks may not be accessible.

For information stored on optical disks, the initial design must use open architecture so that hardware and software is not tied to a vendor or a technology. Nonproprietary compression techniques must be used because they may make the migration to a new system possible. (Proprietary compression techniques are often suggested to make retrieval faster.) Require vendors to bridge data from one system to another so migration is possible and to guarantee service. A written plan for migration to a new system is also necessary.

Another very important facet of having information stored on optical technology is to maintain system documentation to ensure authenticity. This provides the best chance to retrieve and manipulate old data. Authentic representation can be guaranteed by using a documentation system that reflects system reliability, giving only certain people access, using certain kinds of disks, and establishing audit trails.

Microfilm and paper are necessary backups to any optical system. Some equipment will create microfilm at the same time it is stored into an optical system. COM -Computer output microfilm is another technology that creates microfilm from scanned images. Both are very expensive.

A publication of interest may be the Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) standard, TR25, Use of Optical Disks for Public Records. It is available for sale from AIIM. Its focus is not, however, preservation. Visit the AIIM home page at http://www.aiim.org or call 301/887-8202.
MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN LIBRARY
Wednesday, July 31
by Debbie Tavenner

Michael Chernick, VT, and Debbie Tavenner had schedules that left them fortunate to be able to visit the Missouri Botanical Garden Library. A librarian, shared portions of the Post-1753 Rare Book Collection with us and spoke a little about the library. She likened the classification of plants to legal study--both are based on precedent. Skipping over someone's previous work would be like missing a case on point. One of the most fascinating items that could be touched was a copy from the first printing and first edition of Darwin's Origin of the Species. All of the books displayed were beautifully preserved. The library's Shoenberg Conservation Center is, however, currently without a conservator on staff. The following is taken from the library brochure. You can visit the library at the Web site: http://www.mobot.org.

The library was established in 1859 when Henry Shaw opened the garden to the public. The primary users are garden researchers, graduate students, and visiting scientists. The general collection consists of more than 110,000 volumes of monographs and journals and more than 2,000 periodicals via subscription or exchange. The core emphasis is plant taxonomic and floristic literature, current and retrospective, in all languages. Less comprehensively, the library collects works in related botanical fields, natural history, travel and exploration, geography, horticulture, and landscape design. The library participates in OCLC and interlibrary loan. When fully staffed there are eight full-time and five part-time employees, assisted by approximately 40 volunteers. Some graduate students serve as interns on special projects, but interestingly, the interns are hardly ever library science students. The variety of foreign language materials present challenges for the small cataloging staff.

In addition to the Rare Book Collection, the library has several other special collections of note. The Sturtevant Pre-Linnean Collection, with books from 1474 to 1753, includes many herbals and other works that are among the earliest attempts to classify plants systematically. The Linnean Collection contains more than 900 volumes by Carl Linnaeus, his revisions, and his students' works. More than 1,000 volumes in the folio collection are important for many full-size plant illustrations. The folio collection contains a copy of Banks' Florilegium, a limited edition of 738 engravings made from 18th century copper plates that record plant discoveries on Captain Cook's first voyage. The Steere Collection is one of the most important collections on bryology, the study of mosses. The Niederlander Collection houses 600 volumes relating to the history of printing, bookbinding, and book conservation.

The library is preparing for a move to a new building designed to be earthquake proof and with more suitable lighting to assist with preserving the collection. The current library has windows all around covered by mini blinds.

Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee
Saturday, July 27
by Clare Cholik

The Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee met for the final time during this conference year on Saturday, July 27 in St. Louis, MO. Staff Chair, Alfreed "Butch" Speer, introduced members of the staff nominating committee along with the candidates seeking membership on the Executive Committee.

Chairs of the LSCT Task Forces gave their final reports of the year. The International Activities Task Force received an update on two training programs taking place in Africa, and members heard about the international activities planned for the Annual Meeting. The Professional Development Task Force reviewed the 1996 Legislative Staff Management Institute. Members of the task force also finalized plans for the staff information booth, which provided information to legislative staff as they registered for the Annual Meeting, and also for the Annual Meeting concurrent session that involved all the staff sections. The Information Technology Task Force focused on their recommendations to NCSL, which include working to develop guidelines for legislative Web sites and soliciting input from users regarding electronic access to NCSL. The group also received an update on NCSL's project to integrate their information services.

Lastly, John Turcotte, Chair of the Strategic Planning Task Force, presented an overview of that group's report on the services NCSL provides to legislative staff. The task force concluded that, for the most part, NCSL provides excellent service to legislative staff and suggested only modest changes. One of the suggestions for NCSL was making better use of
technology to deliver information and services to staff. Another was providing more information, such as financial reports and procedural guides, to the executive committees of the staff sections. The task force also recommended that NCCL do more to reach new legislators and new legislative staffers quickly, and use the “NCCL Inside” (a regular feature of State Legislatures magazine) to promote staff activities.

The first Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee meeting of 1996-97 will take place November 8-10, 1996 in Mobile, Alabama.

Concurrent Session: Legislative Staff Working as a Team
Monday, July 29
by Debbie Tavenner, OH

Bill Pound, NCCL Executive Director, moderated a panel of nine staff section representatives who discussed their roles in the life of a bill. The concurrent's purposes were the promotion of team building, increased understanding of the importance of staff work in the process, improvement of communications between staff, and sharing interstate resources. Lynda Davis of Maryland represented the UDL staff section. Other panelists were: Pat Humble, Arizona, Research and Committee Staff Section; Paul Dlugolecki, Pennsylvania, National Association of Legislative Fiscal Officers; John Fellows, Utah, Legal Services Staff Section; Jim Greenwalt, Minnesota, National Association of Legislative Information Technology; Ramona Kenady, Oregon, American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries; Phil Leone, Virginia, National Legislative Program Evaluation Society; Anne Murray, New Mexico, Leadership Staff Section; Carleton Turner, Texas, National Legislative Services and Security Association. Upon the conclusion of the panel, the audience and the panelists broke into small groups for informal discussions about staff roles.

The following information was prepared as a handout at the concurrent session. It summarizes the staff responsibilities of the different staff sections.

Fundamental Staff Responsibilities: How Legislative Staff in Each of the Staff Sections Facilitate the Legislative Process

American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries

CORE ACTIVITIES:

--Ensure that all constitutional, parliamentary, statutory and policy requirements are followed when the Legislature conducts its business.
--Compile, print and publish a journal of the proceedings of the house; prepare all measures, histories, and related publications that include status of measures, agendas, bill indexes, committee hearing schedules, and rosters.
--Notify the other house of all actions taken.
--Certify to and transmit to the other house all bills, resolutions and papers requiring the concurrence of the other house immediately upon their passage or adoption.
--Call the roll.
--Read all bills, resolutions, amendments and other papers ordered read by the house or the presiding officer.
--Provide and disseminate information to members, staff, and the general public relevant to the legislative process.
--Retain all measures and official papers or records of the proceedings and actions.
--Oversee the engrossment and enrollment of bills.
--Secure the proper authentication of bills that have passed both houses and transmit to the executive.
IN MANY STATES
--Act as parliamentarian.
--Supervise House employees and perform other administrative duties.
--Handle lobbyist registration and quarterly reports.
--Oversee the use of legislative space within the Capitol.

Leadership Staff Section
CORE ACTIVITIES
--Perform tasks at direction of leadership or party caucus, including management, policy information and administrative duties.
--Act as liaison with Clerk's Office, majority and minority staffs, bill drafting staff and all other staff groupings.
--Functions vary substantially from state to state, and from time to time within a state.
IN SOME STATES
--Monitor legislation.
--Serve as Chief Administrative Officer for the chamber.
--Coordinate with rank-and-file legislators.
--Policy advisor to leadership.
--Advise on referral or bills to committee.
--Speak on behalf of leader.
--Media relations.--
--Legislative staff management.
Legal Services Staff Section
CORE ACTIVITIES
--Receive bill requests, and interview legislators on bill topic.
--Research constitutionality and legality of the proposed legislation.
--Draft legislation and amendments as needed.
ACTIVITIES SOMETIMES PERFORMED BY LEGAL STAFF
--Educate and negotiate with lobbyists and other partisans on bills.
--Ensure that legislature meets legal and constitutional requirements when acting on bills.
--Policy research and analysis.
--Provide testimony or act as resource during consideration of bill.
--Summarize or digest bills.
--Prepare a formal or informal opinion on the constitutionality of the bill.
--Evaluate rules promulgated by agencies after passage.

Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section
CORE ACTIVITIES
--Collect information on topics likely to interest or concern legislators.
--Keep legislators informed on new sources of data and publications.
--Provide research services and offer assistance to legislators and other staff.
--Collect documents from library collections, on-line resources, journals, other libraries, NCSL, etc.
--Organize access to electronic data bases
IN SOME STATES
--Index session laws.
--Assign subject heads for bill status system.
--Collect, organize, and preserve legislative records.

National Association of Legislative Fiscal Officers
CORE ACTIVITIES
--Staff budget or appropriations committees.
--Review and analyze agency budgets.
--Secure budget justification data from state agencies.
--Conduct research and answer information requests.
IN MANY STATES
--Prepare legislative alternatives to executive budget proposals.
--Make budget recommendations to legislators.
--Staff revenue committees and analyze tax legislation.
--Prepare fiscal notes.
--Prepare short-term and long-term expenditure and revenue forecasts.
IN SOME STATES
--Post-audit responsibilities, reviews of agencies operations.
--Administrative rule analysis.
--Economic and demographic forecasting.
--(Rarely) Handle constituent affairs for legislators.

National Legislative Services and Security Association
CORE ACTIVITIES
--Maintain order and normal operations in the legislature while protecting rights of free speech, dissent, and access to public places.
--Protect the Capitol and its occupants.
IN SOME STATES
--Oversee parking.
--Manage buildings and grounds operations.
--Provide administrative, accounting, postal, and courier services.
--Supervise pages and interns.

Research and Committee Staff Section
CORE ACTIVITIES
--Research legislative topics in state and federal statutes, and in files of previously-filed bills.
--Touch base with NCSL to obtain comparative interstate information.
--Other research as required.
--May distribute copies of draft for comment among agencies, lobbyists, other concerned parties, if so requested by the author.
--Explain contents of bill in committee OR is present as resource for legislator who explains the bill.
--Responds to information requests.
IN MANY STATES
--Summarizes bills for attachment to bill or for general distribution.
IN SOME STATES
--Drafts legislation, and submits drafts to Counsel for review.
--Drafts amendments for submission in committee.
--Drafts amendments requested in committee.
--Explain bills in caucus OR is present as resource of legislator who explains the bill. May have comparable roles in conference committee. May draft conference report.

National Association of Legislative Information Technology
CORE ACTIVITIES
--Drafting legislation and maintaining bill status.
--Maintenance of constituent lists and creation of mailings.
--Media communications--television and cable programming, and possible video conferencing.
--Electronic research using on-line data bases and the Internet.
--Office automation--improving the effectiveness and efficiency of staff and legislators, including text processing, e-mail, calendars and scheduling, statistical modeling, and financial spreadsheets.
--Assistance with management techniques, including payroll, accounts payable, the general ledger, and budgeting.
--Communications, including telephones, facsimile machine, personal video conferences, and telecommuting.

National Legislative Program Evaluation
CORE ACTIVITIES--
--Assist legislative oversight committee or other governing body in choosing agencies or topics for study.
--Use professional standards to conduct objective and significant research.
--Communicate findings with the oversight body, legislative committees, individual legislators and the public.
--Treat agencies and jurisdictions under review with professionalism and fairness, and maintain open communication with them in the course of a study.
--Purposes of program evaluations may include
   --Determining how money is spent.
   --Whether money is spent effectively.
   --How agencies are managed.
   --Whether programs are reaching their goals.
   --What options exist for better conducting the public's business.

NEWS FROM THE STATES

Thanks to all contributors and coordinators for collecting the following information for *Newsline*.

HAWAII
Frances Enos announces the library put up a Web site in January. Its primary purpose is to facilitate legislative research on the Web. It does in cyberspace what the library does in real space--provide information and access to information to the legislative community. The site provide links to evaluated, annotated sites valuable to patrons, and she feels they got off to a very good start. They find that as the scope of the page grows and new material is added, particularly on-line LRB reports, it is becoming difficult to find the time to seek out, evaluate and annotate new sites, and update the annotations for existing ones. The library set up a procedure for adding and evaluating sites, assigning areas of concentration to each of the four librarians, and a procedure to get new sites linked and annotated.

Library Specialist Stephen Bibbs is the WebMaster. Frances says... "we're in real deep! Nevertheless, the pages are getting good use and good reviews from legislative staff and there's no turning back." The Hawaii Judiciary uses the site almost exclusively as a starting point for its legal research on the Web and the library has heard from executive offices. One of the LRB reports added to the site is a popular annual publication called the Directory of State, County and Federal Officials. Having this on the site not only enables continuous updating and increased accessibility, but as government agencies get on the Web themselves, the library links from the directory to the agency, creating a point of origin to access all on-line government bodies.

The legislature is getting linked through the directory, too. The entire House is already there. So, despite the added workload, Frances and staff are pleased and excited and they would appreciate your comments and suggestions. The address is: http://www.hawaii.gov/1rb/lib.html. PS: From Library Publications and Guides on the home page, click on The WEBster, a newsletter on Internet tips. "We think it's rather jazzy. Aloha from all of us here."

MONTANA
Librarian Beth Furbush writes "the main change for the Montana Legislative Library, at the moment, is planning the upgrade from InMagic Plus to DB/Textworks. The windows version of the software is substantially different from the DOS version and while the new capabilities will be useful, letting go of old habits is hard." She hopes the upgrade is completed in the next few weeks, as the Legislature is beginning its season of final interim reports and preparations for session. After the next session there are plans to renovate workspace in the capitol. Beth anticipates the Library will go through a physical move next year. She ends with "we're also still dealing with the after effects of branch consolidation, but that's another whole story..."

NEVADA
Nan Bowers proposes the possibility that maybe an informal group of librarians involved in Web sites could be formed to share "war stories, staffing concerns, and procedures." Nevada is just beginning this process and learning from other states.
OHIO
Debbie Tavenner reports the Legislative Service Commission is almost ready to replace its InMagic Plus book and legal memo databases with DB/Textworks. Both databases are converted, but both are being maintained until the computer staff can support the conversion, which will likely be late September or early October. Check-In for periodicals is already up and running and appears to be going well. A support contract for one year was purchased to help get through this period, but so far the staff has not needed to use it much. Training will have to be squeezed in between now and December. Much of it will have to be on the fly because like many states, Ohio will be getting ready for a busy "budget" year session.

TENNESSEE
Julie McCown has recently retired as Legislative Librarian with the Tennessee Office of Legal Services. Her tenure in that office spanned more than thirty years! Julie's plans include taking it easy for a while and getting caught up on a lot of "loose ends." She then would like to gain part-time employment in a bookstore so she can "subsidize her habit of reading." The staff section wishes Julie well and thanks her for her fine service to all of us over the course of many years!

Julie's replacement is Thomas Edward "Eddie" Weeks. Mr. Weeks comes to the Office of Legal Services after having spent the last several years as manager of a branch of the public library in Memphis, Tennessee. He is new to the legislative environment and looks forward to his association with members of the staff section. Currently, he is seeking advice from other legislative librarians on a major cataloging project he will soon undertake in his library.

TEXAS
Check out the Web site for the Texas Legislative Reference Library. The address is:
http://www.irl.state.tx.us. Rona Mertink developed it.

VERMONT
Michael Chernick, Research Counsel, Vermont Legislative Council, writes to announce the Vermont General Assembly's new home page on the World Wide Web, http://www. cite.state.vt.us/legcon/. It can also be accessed via NCSL home page's "Legislative Sites" hyperlink. The Vermont site features a number of information files regarding legislative activities in the Green Mountain State. Included on the page are bills as introduced, passed by each legislative chamber, as submitted to the governor, and as enacted. Also posted are resolutions, the daily Senate and House Calendars and Journals, the Vermont Constitution, the Vermont Statutes (in an unofficial compilation) and House, Senate, and Joint Rules. The legislative meeting calendar is updated weekly.

From a legislator's perspective, the site contains biographical profiles from the Legislative Directory, and where available, members' e-mail addresses. Before the General Assembly reconvenes in January, a searchable bill system will be added. A keyword searching capacity for the statutes will be available at a future date.

In designing the page, one of the primary objectives was to present bills in a format that accurately portrays the changes to statutory law. This is accomplished by enabling the researcher to retrieve documents in either HTML or Word Perfect 6.1. This process is expedited by providing a choice of hypertext accessible conversion browsers. The Vermont Legislative Home Page is a continuous work in progress that will be regularly updated during future sessions. Comments and critiques are welcomed and may be sent to Mikec@leg.state.vt.us.

CONSULTING WITH THE BOTSWANA PARLIAMENT'S NATIONAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY
by Marilyn Cathcart, MN

From mid-April to mid-May 1996, I continued consulting work with the Botswana Parliament started in September 1994 by Johanne Holmes Greer (Maryland Department of Legislative Reference) and described in the Spring 1996 issue of LRL.

In the months that intervened between Johanne's experiences and mine, the Botswana Parliament had made a considerable commitment to the library's improvement and development. Many of the services that were established during Johanne's consultancy have been continued. In particular, the Parliamentary Clipper has been a rousing success. In 1995, a librarian from the Botswana National Library Service was lent to the Parliamentary library for a period of six months. During that time, progress was made on analyzing and cataloging the collection, establishing cataloging policy and procedures, and drafting a collection development and maintenance policy.

In April 1996, the U.S. Embassy donated an extensive collection of reference books to the National Assembly
Library. The current librarian, Ms. Batho Molatthegi, was sent to the Parliamentary Library of Zimbabwe to study its operations. It is clear that the Botswana Parliament considers the National Assembly Library to be a valuable service for the members and staff of Parliament. During the month I spent in Botswana, I was able to build on the able work that had preceded me and to offer suggestions for further improvements.

The National Assembly Library is staffed by one trained librarian who is selected from the National Library Service and "seconded" to the Botswana Parliament. This individual is not a parliamentary employee nor is she permanently attached to the Parliamentary Library. Additional staff consist of one permanent library assistant, one temporary typist and (temporarily) two secondary school graduates participating in Tirelo Setshaba, Botswana's national service system. This level of staffing is very austere given the labor-intensive nature of library work. Presently, the librarian must do all cataloging (approximately two-thirds of the collection is uncataloged), indexing of specialized materials, reference work, current awareness, collection development and management. There is very little interlibrary cooperation. Special libraries are rare. Virtually all processes are manual; computerization and shared cataloging are dreams for the future.

The library's collection consists mainly of Parliamentary materials and reports from Botswana governmental ministries, departments and parastatal organizations. In addition, there are many outdated and irrelevant books such as the fiction collection. In the past, the library had received donations of materials from various countries. Often these materials had been withdrawn from libraries in various western countries or consisted of "propaganda" publications; many are of little value to the members or staff of the Botswana Parliament. As suggested by Johanne, the library maintains several specialized files, including newspaper clipping files and indexed bill files.

The library subscribes to an extensive number of newspapers and was struggling to decide how to manage the information in them. As in most of our libraries, the librarian also puzzled over determining methods to organize "grey" or ephemeral literature. In many respects, the issues facing the Botswana Parliament National Assembly Library are identical to the issues faced by each one of us daily. One unusual problem facing their library and research staff is the fact that Batswana culture is an oral one. Reading is not a traditional method of imparting information. Therefore, the library was attempting to explore alternative ways to deliver information to the members of parliament (MPs). Much of my work revolved around defining, focusing, developing, organizing and improving the collection.

When I arrived in country, parliamentary staff requested that I suggest services which could be offered by the library and suggest ways to encourage MPs to use the facilities and information. To enable the parliamentary staff to select services that could be accomplished given the collections and culture I prepared a graduated list of services typically offered by legislative (and parliamentary) libraries and suggested several basic steps the Botswana Parliament could undertake to establish the functionality and credibility of the Library. I also prepared a list of suggestions for increasing members' use of the library, but the primary recommendations I stressed in this area were the necessity to develop a strong and reliable collection and to build the trust and confidence in the library's relevance.

In addition, to drafting detailed suggestions for services to be offered and ways to increase members' use of the library, I worked with Batho Molatthegi to process an uncataloged backlog of approximately 1,000 government reports, many predating independence. We selected, organized, indexed, made accessible and developed procedures for handling all materials retained (nearly 700 items). In order to make the items readily identifiable, I programmed a database (searchable by author, subject and title) to be stored on a newly-acquired Macintosh computer.

All records were entered by the Tirelo Setshaba students, neither one of whom had used a typewriter (let alone a computer) prior to their being asked to do data entry. Working with library staff, I also developed a simple procedure for indexing Parliamentary Questions and Answers and refined it by indexing over 500 Questions and Answers. Staff of Parliament, U.S.I.S. and I selected over $4,000 worth of library materials to complete the U.S. Embassy book donation project and I offered several key recommendations to the Acting Chief Clerk of the Assembly and other high-level staff. These included:

- The librarian should be made a permanent employee of Parliament rather than being seconded from the National Library Service.
- Materials in the library must be kept up to date.
• The library's periodical collection must be updated and supported.

• A complete set of Parliament's public documents should be available in the Library.

• One copy of all public materials printed by the Botswana Government Printer's Office should be deposited with the National Assembly Library.

• Subject access to parliamentary materials should be improved.

• The visibility of the library should be increased.

While these may appear to be basic concepts, the library was not following them and, as a result, the value and credibility of the institution was greatly impaired. In my final report, I attempted to provide basic principles for a legislative/parliamentary library as well as concrete suggestions for improvements which could be undertaken in Botswana. (If anyone is interested in the final report, I would be happy to share a copy.)

I am very appreciative of having been able to undertake this project. In particular, I would like to express my thanks to Johanne Holmes Greer who generously encouraged me to apply and offered her insights, to the leadership of the Minnesota legislature who approved my participation and to my husband who watched two cats, a dog and a house while I enjoyed the magnificence of Africa. Most of all, the staff of the Botswana Parliament were generous with their friendship and all made me feel welcome. I hope that I was able to give some measure of wisdom to Botswana in exchange for all I was fortunate enough to learn while there.

AWARDS

LRL Notable Document Awards Committee Report

At the professional development seminar in Albany, New York, fall 1995, legislative research librarians considered annual LRL recognition of documents for excellence in presentation of subject matter relevant to legislators and staff. The guidelines for award selection and promotion were drafted by a committee of Deborah Priest (NY), Marilyn Guttromson (ND) and Chris Pattarozzi, NCSL’s former LRL staff section person. Should the nomination process produce several exemplary documents, the committee felt LRL should retain the option of issuing more than one notable document award in a year. The guidelines, to be discussed at the professional development seminar in October, provide a framework of purpose, process, and promotion, leaving details of implementation to the Notable Document Awards Committee.

However, for the first awards (planned for 1997) the committee developed a suggested timetable for the selection procedure:

• At the NCSL Annual Meeting or at the first LRL Executive Committee meeting following, the LRL chair appoints a Notable Document Award Committee chair and not more than three other people to serve on the committee.

• Winter issues of *Newsline* and *State Government Research Checklist* carry award criteria guidelines with the nomination form.

• March 1 is the deadline for submitting forms and documents to the awards committee chair.

• Chair adjusts to share nomination forms and documents with other committee members. By the end of May, all committee members make their evaluations.

• By the end of June, the committee selects award winning documents.

• Announcement of awards appear in summer issues of *Newsline* and *State Government Research Checklist*.

Between the guidelines and the suggested timetable, the first awards committee should have enough outline to complete its task. After the 1997 awards are past, the committee may well revise or rewrite the guidelines to fit real world scenarios.

Legislative Staff Achievement Award

The first annual Legislative Staff Achievement Awards (LSAA) will be presented to deserving staff at the August 1997 Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. Recipients of the LSAA are selected by their peers from each of NCSL's nine staff sections and have made various contributions in support of the work of state legislatures. All of those honored share a common bond of commitment and achievement in serving and strengthening the legislative institution.
Description of the Award

The Legislative Staff Achievement Award will be awarded annually to designated individuals or offices that have demonstrated excellence in supporting the work of a state legislature and strengthening the legislative institution. The awards have added meaning in that they are bestowed by the recipients’ peers through each of the nine staff sections and the Assembly on State Issues (ASI) of the National Conference of State Legislatures. Examples of accomplishments recognized by the Legislative Staff Achievement Award include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Helping to improve the effectiveness of the legislative institution.
- Supporting the legislative process and the mission of the legislature.
- Exhibiting a high degree of professionalism, competence, and integrity in serving the legislature and the public.
- Contributing to the work of the National Conference of State Legislatures.
- Demonstrating expertise in a particular field.
- Contributing to existing knowledge.

Nominating Process

Each staff section and the ASI chair may nominate up to two individuals, teams or legislative offices from its membership for recognition. In addition, the staff chair of the Assembly on State Issues may nominate up to two individuals serving on ASI committees and task forces. The governing body of the staff section accepts nominations from its members and develops and applies criteria to evaluate nominees. Each staff section may use whatever means it chooses to select honorees, as long as the process is equitable and open to all members. The chairs of the staff sections and the ASI chair will forward the names of the nominees to the NCSL staff chair in accordance with a timetable that takes into account the need to notify awardees and prepare suitable awards. The nomination should include a brief description of the accomplishments of the individuals or groups selected and why they deserve recognition.

Awards Ceremony

Recipients of the awards will be announced by the NCSL staff chair during the legislative staff luncheon at the NCSL Annual Meeting. Each honoree will be recognized and receive an appropriate plaque at the ceremony. State Legislatures magazine is an appropriate vehicle to provide additional recognition for award recipients.

Other Issues

Publicity about the nomination process should appear in a number of places including the newsletters published by individual staff sections, State Legislatures magazine, the NCSL web site, and a separate mailing to each staff section. The first awards will be announced at the 1997 Annual Meeting.

The Professional Development Task Force will need to send a letter to each staff section chair describing the award and outlining the nomination process and a general timeline for soliciting nominations, selecting awardees and notifying the NCSL staff chair.

The Professional Development Task Force will need to develop a procedure for notifying those selected for recognition so that they can arrange to attend the awards presentation.

NCSL PUBLICATIONS

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

BOOKS

- The Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Evaluation and Control Act: Model Legislative Language (Item #4667)
- A Legislator’s Guide to Municipal Solid Waste Management (Item #4669)
- A Legislator’s Guide to Comprehensive Juvenile Justice (Item #9375)
- Campaign Finance, Lobbying and Ethics Legislation 1995 (Item #7144)
- Health Care Legislation 1995 (Item #6655) (formerly called Maternal and Child Health Legislation)
- 1995-96 Goals for State-Federal Action (Item #8320)
- Medicaid Survival Kit (Item #6654) will be available in November.
- Access to Electronic Public Records (Item #7153)
- Electronic Access to Legislative Information (Item #7154)
Environmental Management Series (Item #4664)
  Future Land Use: A Criterion for Cleanup at Nuclear Weapons Facilities (Item #4658)
The State's Role in Effective Technology Transfer (Item #4659)
  Item #4668)Radiological Contamination and Public Health (Item #4660)
Worker Health & Safety During Nuclear Facility Cleanup (Item #4662)
Retraining the Nuclear Work Force (Item #4663)
Pollution Prevention (Item #4661)
Tribal Sovereignty (Item #4670)
An Assessment of Regulatory and Administrative Cleanup at U.S. Department of Energy Sites

LEGISBRIEFS

Tax Breaks for Retirement Income, Vol.4, No.31
Medical Savings Accounts: An Update, Vol.4, No.32
State Gambling Taxes, Vol.4, No.33
Managed Health Care for the Homeless? Vol.4, No.34
New Design for Census 2000, Vol.4, No.35
State Tax and Expenditure Limits, Vol.4, No.36

STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

United States' Acceptance of Spent Nuclear Fuel from Foreign Research Reactors (Item 7302-2106)
Disaster Mitigation (Item 7302-2107)
Conjunctive Use: Treating Surface and Groundwater As One (Item 7302-2108)

NEXT ISSUE OF NEWSLINE

The deadline for the Fall edition of NEWSLINE is, October 30, 1996. Send news about your library or significant legislative events in your state to your regional coordinator or Rita Thaemert at NCSL, Denver.

Thanks to the many staff section members who submitted information for this issue. NEWSLINE is published four times a year by the Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section of NCSL, and is edited by Rita Thaemert and formatted by Darlene Johnson (NCSL, Denver).

STAFF SECTION OFFICERS

Chair
Nancy Quesada
Librarian
Legislative Research Council
Texas

Chair-Elect
Jonetta Douglas
Senior Librarian
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Iowa

Immediate Past Chair
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South Dakota

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Librarian
Committee on Legislative Research
Missouri

NCSL Staff: Jo Anne Bourquard and Rita Thaemert
STAFF SECTION REGIONAL COORDINATORS
Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section

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

COORD. JEANNE M. BURKE (NE)
(402) 471-0075
Fax (402) 471-2126
Iowa
Minnesota
Montana
Nebraska
North Dakota
South Dakota
Wyoming

COORD. RONA MERTINK (TX)
(512) 463-1252
Fax (512) 475-4626
Arizona
Colorado
Kansas
New Mexico
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COORD. JANET LANIGAN (FL)
(904) 488-2812
Fax (904) 488-9879
Alabama
Arkansas
Florida
Georgia
Louisiana
Mississippi
Tennessee

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

COORD. JOHANNE GREER (MD)
(410) 841-3810
Fax (410) 841-3850
Delaware
Maryland
New Jersey
North Carolina
Pennsylvania
South Carolina
Virginia
West Virginia

COORD. NAN BOWERS (NV)
(702) 687-6827
Fax (702) 687-3048
Alaska
California
Hawaii
Idaho
Nevada
Oregon
Washington