CHAIR’S COLUMN
By Clare Cholik, SD
LRL Chairperson

As we begin a new year and many of us embark on new legislative sessions, I think we should all take a moment out of our busy schedules to “pat ourselves on the back.” Whether it is by retrieving a book no one else can seem to find, by locating statistics on the Internet in a moment’s notice or by doing any of the other various tasks we perform, we provide a valuable service. It is easy to get so caught up in our day-to-day activities that we lose sight of our contributions to the legislative process. Let’s try to never let that happen.

Speaking of contributions, I want to thank all of you who contributed to our soon-to-be published legislative history project, which is now entitled Legislative Intent: A 50-State Guide. Specifics regarding the publication are described elsewhere in this newsletter. I think it is a publication of which we should all be proud. Special thanks go to Rona Mertink, Sally Reynolds and Nancy Quesada of the TX Legislative Library for making it a reality. Rona inherited the project from Brenda Olds and worked diligently on it. Sally and Nancy offered much support and assistance along the way. I also want to extend gratitude to NCSL for their willingness to publish the guide on computer diskette even though they had no prior experience in marketing diskettes.

I must also offer my appreciation to all of you who responded to the recent survey regarding electronic access to NCSL. Thanks to the efforts of the regional coordinators in “spreading the word,” I received many, many responses. I have compiled our sentiments and suggestions, and have passed them on to the other members of the LSCC Information Technology Task Force this month. I am confident that our input will be very valuable in the process of assessing the databases currently provided by NCSL.

Good ideas always seem to stem from our gatherings. An example of this arose at our Professional Development Seminar last October. The suggestion was made to implement a mentor program, that would unite a newly-hired legislative librarian with an experienced one. Ideally, the two librarians would be in libraries of a similar size and perhaps even from the same area of the country. The mentor would be someone from whom the new librarian could seek advice and guidance from time to time.

Since the seminar, I have visited with several of our newest members about the mentor program, and they have responded positively to it. In fact, two of them have already been matched with a mentor, and as we get new members, the staff section officers will continue to pair them with mentors. If any of you have any suggestions on the program or would be willing to serve as a mentor, please let me know. I think it will provide a great opportunity for us to network with each other.

Lastly, on a personal note, I want to reiterate to everyone who reads this newsletter that the SD State Library is open. Though the library’s continued funding came into question at one point in time, its staff never stopped providing great service to the citizens of their state, including me.

Best wishes to all of you for 1996!

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CORRECTION
IN THE LAST ISSUE OF NEWSLINE IT WAS INCORRECTLY REPORTED THAT THE SOUTH DAKOTA STATE LIBRARY HAD TO CLOSE BRIEFLY. THIS IS INACCURATE AS THEY WERE ABLE TO AVOID CLOSING AFTER VOTERS APPROVED VIDEO LOTTERY AND FUNDING WAS RESTORED.

LEGISLATIVE INTENT PUBLICATION AVAILABLE SOON

The publication we've all been waiting for will hit the newsstands soon!! Ok, that's a slight exaggeration, but LEGISLATIVE INTENT RESEARCH: A FIFTY-STATE GUIDE is nearing the final stages of production at NCSL and will automatically be mailed to every legislative library as soon as the initial run is completed.

This is the publication compiled by the Texas legislative librarians from surveys sent out nationally to collect information on procedures for doing legislative history searches in each state. The project took more than two years to complete because of its scope and the many steps involved in such a detailed work. It will be NCSL's first publication on disk and will sell to the private sector for $35 a copy. Inquiries can be directed to Nancy Quesada in the Texas Legislative Research Library or NCSL's Publications & Marketing Department.

LSCC MEETING
By Clare Cholik, (SD)

A special meeting of the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee was held at the Denver offices of NCSL on Thursday, January 11. LRL Staff Section members attending were Marilyn Cathcart (MN), Clare Cholik (SD), and Sally Reynolds (TX). Marilyn and Clare represent the staff section on the LSCC, and Sally is a member of the Executive Committee, and by virtue of that office serves on the LSCC.

In the morning, Doug Sacarto and Bob Frohling, members of the NCSL staff, demonstrated the NCSLnet and LEGISNET. Doug also displayed NCSL's site on the World Wide Web and discussed future plans for NCSL's electronic information. Most importantly, the plans include integrating all the electronic information and making it accessible through the Web site.

In the afternoon, time was devoted to the LSCC Task Forces. The Information Technology Task Force, on which Clare serves, toured the NCSL offices and spent the remainder of the day focusing on LEGISNET. Members of NCSL's computer staff provided an overview of how LEGISNET has evolved over the years and highlighted some future improvements they plan to implement. These improvements include making it more accessible (via the Web site), providing "point and click" options, and providing linkages to the states.

During the discussion of LEGISNET, Clare presented to the Task Force a compilation of the survey of the staff section regarding electronic access to NCSL. The survey revealed that many staff section members, for a variety of reasons, are having difficulties using NCSLnet in general, and in particular, the new version of LEGISNET. Members of the Task Force and NCSL staff members alike expressed concern that these problems exist. The staff indicated they have already addressed some of the specific problems and are currently focusing on some of the others. Herman Pearson (WI), the chair of the Task Force, asked Clare to work with Bob Frohling in an attempt to assist individual librarians with any difficulties they may have in utilizing LEGISNET, and also to renew the interest of those librarians who may have become alienated from the databases.

Also present during the discussion was Janet Randolph, a new member of the NCSL computer staff, who works with LEGISNET. Janet expressed her willingness to assist members of the staff section with any technical problems or communications questions they may have.

SUMMARIES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR,
ALBANY, NEW YORK
October 12 - 14, 1995

October 12th Sessions
By Nancy Quesada (TX)

Forty-five librarians from fifteen states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, were warmly welcomed to Albany by New York Legislative Librarian Ellen Breslin and New York Assemblyman Jack McEneny.

The initial session was "Information Structures in the Partisan Setting: New York State's Legislative Library, Senate Research Service, and Assembly Information Center." There are three libraries who serve the New York State Legislature. The Legislative Library serves both the Senate and the Assembly, and is non-partisan. The Senate Research
Service serves the Senate, in which one political party holds the majority, and the Assembly Information Center serves the Assembly, in which the other political party holds the majority. Requests for research and information primarily come to each chamber's library from members of the dominant political party. In order to be successful, each librarian must know the library patrons and tailor the library to specific political parties and requests. However, the librarians emphasize that while two of the three libraries have a partisan nature, the librarians themselves do not, and they network extensively with other libraries, librarians and each other.

While none of the libraries is open to the public and constituent contacts are not encouraged, the libraries do answer queries from the public. In addition, there is a bill status information system which is available to the public.

Each library has a different collection because each library has a different purpose. Ellen Breslin of the Legislative Library explained that the Legislative Library was established in 1915 and is located in the Capitol. The collection is concentrated on law and legislation, with the emphasis on legislation. The Library also has access to a legislative retrieval system used for drafting and tracking bills and giving bill status information and the full text of bills. The Library aggressively seeks state agency documents, and has built an excellent collection of state documents. The catalog is on-line and networks with the large New York State Library system. The Library uses on-line legal, newspaper and periodical databases such as Westlaw, Nexis, and Dialog. However, the trend is toward using CD-ROMS which contain the state statutes, regulations and the full text of some newspapers.

Pat Ilnicki, recently retired from the Senate Research Service Library, explained that this library was an outgrowth of a Senate research task force in the early 1970s. The original purpose was to perform in-depth analysis of problems for the Senate. In 1976 a small library was established to support the subject analysts, and the collection now has mostly current federal and state documents. The staff no longer writes legislative reports, but rather summarizes legislation, performs extensive indexing of briefing information and reports on emerging issues and gives quick responses to queries from senators and their staff. The staff relies heavily on on-line database searching, using Dialog, Westlaw, Lexis, Nexis and the Internet. They also prepare a newspaper clipping service using newspapers from all over the state.

Deborah Priest presented information on the Assembly Information Center. The Center began about ten years ago as an information service for the Assembly's Ways & Means Finance committee. The Center kept growing, and in 1993 the research units were consolidated into the Information Center. The Center concentrates on fiscal and financial matters. The staff of four researchers serves 450 legislators and support staff. Deb emphasized they do extensive networking with other libraries and librarians.

The second session was "Thinking Bold, Thinking Big: The Role of Think Tanks in Shaping Public Policy."

Jeffrey Stonecash, of Syracuse University, was the moderator. The speakers were David Shaffer, President of the Public Policy Institute; Frank Mauro, Executive Director for Fiscal Policy Institute; and David Liebschutz, Associate Director, Center for the Study of the States. Mr. Shaffer represented the Business Council, which performs research for the business lobby. Mr. Mauro represented a think tank, and believes that the role of think tanks is to put new ideas on the legislative agenda even though these ideas may not currently be in vogue. Mr. Liebschutz summarized the work of think tanks, and their interaction with legislatures. Think tanks gather information from many sources such as government documents, or conduct primary research such as surveys and analyses. Think tanks produce reports, books, and analyses that are then presented to legislators, the public and other decision makers. They can be used to lobby for certain legislation or to provide technical assistance to governments. Think tanks can be valuable to libraries and librarians in that they are sources of information, but librarians should be aware of the point of view of the think tank, the purpose of the reports, and the source of their funding.

The Steuben Club, an historic athletic club, was the setting for lunch. Assemblyman Jack McEneny, the author of Albany, the Capitol City, gave an entertaining history of the city. After lunch, we took a trolley tour of historical points of the city, with Mr. McEneny as our guide. Later in the afternoon Andrea Lazarski, Executive Director of the Restoration of the Capitol, gave a tour of the building. The distinctive styles of each of the four successive primary architects was evident in the chambers of the Senate and Assembly, and the magnificent staircases and corridors of the Capitol.
Tour of the New York State Capitol Building
by Earl Graybeal, State Services Organization

Legislative librarians were led by Andrea Lazarski on a tour of the State Capitol Building. Ms. Lazarski, the Executive Director of the State Commission on the Restoration of the Capitol, shared her extensive knowledge of the history of the building. She presented the restoration process as yet another step in the evolving life of the Capitol’s magnificent public spaces. She skillfully provided the historical decision-making process and described the diverse styles of architects Isaac Perry and Thomas Fuller, who designed specific spaces in both gothic and neoclassical styles.

The State Capitol building was originally designed to house all branches of state government. Like many others around the country, it lost much of the grand sense of public space when overcrowding and progressive renovations brought forth features such as dropped ceilings and a cafeteria that blocked natural light.

We learned that the building was constructed over a 32-year period beginning around 1870. The original architects, however, had little knowledge of the engineering aspects of laying a foundation on a bed of clay. One can only imagine a vaulted stone ceiling over the Assembly chamber adorned with murals. The weight of the stone ceiling added to the burden of the weak foundation, resulting in pebbles dropping onto desks of Assembly members.

Another striking fact was that plans were made for carved detail work by skilled artisans. As the immense nature of the project became apparent, some of the intricate detail work was sacrificed due to limitations of funding. The carved dental work below the soaring stained glass windows of the Senate Chamber displayed the progress of master carvers in the center of the wall, with work of apprentices toward the periphery followed by uncarved teeth in the outermost sections.

Librarians were permitted to view a major restoration of space in progress that was originally designed to be the Capitol’s rotunda with a 50-foot domed ceiling. In the 1890s the governor pared down the project and a compromise design was reached in the 1920s when Architect Dodge created a two-story War Memorial rotunda. The space was eventually broken up into individual offices. Later renovations left scarred stone with no sense of the original design. We saw the restoration of the mural ceiling with minor flaws being corrected by present day artists and restoration experts. The project began in early 1995 and is scheduled for completion in early 1996. The rotunda area is designated to become the Governor’s reception room.

As a historic work in progress, we saw the use of different materials such as cork in the galleries, which has been chipped away by tourists, and the use of molded fiberglass to replace gilded leather that had deteriorated. Ms. Lazarski also shared secrets of weight-reducing materials such as composite stone. We also learned to recognize the contrast of modern stone carving compared to the work of original artisans.

One can imagine how the grand public spaces of the New York State Capitol building will eventually evolve. It is evident that the present Commission is dedicated to restoring and preserving the integrity of the edifice by delving into its rich history, preserving sound components, and producing high quality reproductions where they are needed.

INNOVATION NEW YORK
By Clare Cholik (SD)

Friday’s schedule of events began with a panel on information technology. Representatives of three New York–based companies showcased products in the areas of information retrieval and management. The session was moderated by David Keiper, Commissioner of the NY Legislative Bill Drafting Commission. He spoke briefly on New York’s Legislative Retrieval System. Users of the system can get the status of a bill instantaneously and have access to the text of bills often several days before they are available to the members of the legislature in hard copy. The system is used extensively by state agencies and librarians, but it is also popular among lobbyists and other members of the private sector.

The first panelist was Michael Nevins, Director of State Technologies, Inc., a non-profit research group. His organization’s aim is to give upper and middle managers in both the public and private sectors a forum for exchanging ideas. It accomplishes this by hosting public policy and technology forums, as well as publishing a service on the World Wide Web called Government on Line. Government on Line currently features successful programs being implemented in cities and states throughout the northeastern United States. The entry for each program consists of four parts: the problem which precipitated the program, the solution, the results, and the name and phone number of a contact person. The service is searchable either by locality or by
subject. The service also contains a "Best of Practice" section which highlights the most successful programs in a series of categories and includes entries from 42 states. The Internet address for Government on Line is www.gol.org.

Randy Drawas was the second presenter. He is the Vice President for Communications of the MapInfo Corporation, a company which was founded in 1986 by four technical school students and has been expanding ever since. It produces mapping software, which combines geographic and demographic information. The software uses geography as the organizing principle and allows users to convert existing data to map form. MapInfo Software is included in Microsoft's Excel '95 and Office for Windows '95. It has applications in just about every discipline. Mr. Drawas cited examples of its use in the insurance business, criminal analysis, emergency medical services, and county government.

Lastly, attendees heard from John Botti, President of BitWise Designs, Inc. Mr. Botti discussed DocSTAR, his company's document imaging system. The system scans 50,000 pages per optical disk and is equipped with a jukebox disk changer. It extracts information from each document using every piece of data, thus simplifying document searching. Handwritten documents can be scanned along with diagrams and charts. The system makes copies and sends and receives Faxes. Further enhancements, including an Internet link, are forthcoming. The system is being test marketed in Albany, but will be available nationwide early in 1996. It is billed as being among the simplest document imaging systems to use, and is available on a monthly payment basis.

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER
By Debbie Tavenner, (OH)

Allan Carter, Senior Librarian
Topic: Legislative Intent

Mr. Carter, author of Legislative Intent in New York State: Materials, Cases, and Annotated Bibliography (1981), and New York State Constitution: Sources of Legislative Intent (1988), spoke about the components or documents that may be available for someone doing legislative intent research in New York State. As is common in other states, the availability of information sources varies. In particular, bills that do not become law are a problem.

The most basic is the bill jacket, which is prepared for all bills passed by the Senate and Assembly. Sometimes this is all there is. A variety of information documents can be found in the bill jacket, but a researcher can only be assured of finding what is called the governor's memo. Other items possibly contained in the bill jacket include sponsor's memo, comments by state agencies or interested parties. It is always advisable to look for references to reports by interest groups. Reports from committees or commissions or transcripts of hearings or debates are almost never contained in the bill jacket, but may be referenced. There are three types of bill jackets: approval jackets, known as bill jackets, veto jackets, for bills the Governor vetoes, and recall jackets, for those bills returned to the Legislature for some correction, but never get back to the Governor.

The New York Legislative Annual, published by a private service company since 1946, is a source to consult to locate various types of memoranda on statutes. It is selective, however, not comprehensive so there is a chance the statute you are researching will not be included.

The New York Legislative Digest and its predecessors, the Legislative Record and Index, provides a complete history of legislative activity, noting information about dates of legislative activity, committees considering the legislation, and year and chapter number of bills signed into law. It also contains a subject index to bills and acts.

He suggested that other government documents are sometimes helpful. In particular, he mentioned the Green Book from the Budget Commission, Public Papers of the Governor, debates of the Senate and Assembly (not a highly recommended source because they may not exist or not have been preserved), or state agency annual reports to the legislature which may contain some comment on pending or enacted legislation. He advised that commentaries from bar associations are questionable.

The New York State Library put a legislative intent tutorial on the world wide web. The address is http://unix2.nysed.gov/library/leghist.

James D. Folts, Associate Archivist
New York State Archives
Topic: New York State Archives

The New York State Archives were statutorily enacted in 1971 and operational in 1978. He feels most law/legislative librarians are novices in the use of archival sources. Legal research texts rarely mention archives. Principles of archives are different from those of libraries. Archives maintain original order, create agency main entry, and describe aggregate groups. File and item indexing is usually a
far distant second tier. There are no extensive finding aids for archival materials that parallel finding aids for legal materials.

Archives always have difficulty getting materials. There are tensions between where the documents are and where they go. Mostly, people do not want to give up documents. Other problems include the relatively recent development of the ability to dispose of records, insufficient guidance on retention of records, and few means of persuasion to get agencies to transfer records.

He noted that a fire in 1911 resulted in the loss of most pre-20th century legislative records. 19th century bill jackets are not there and only a portion of the 20th century bill jackets. The legislature exempts itself from many records requirements and can only be persuaded to cooperate. Archives has a long wish list for legislative materials, including leadership files, bill files, bill tracking records, committee bill files and issues files.

Jean Hargrave, State Law Librarian
State Library
Topic: State Library and Legislative History Tutorial on Hypercard

The State Library was founded in 1818 in a single room in the Capitol. DeWitt Clinton picked the volumes for the library. By statute it is the State Medical and State Law Library. It contains the most complete New York state government document collection and is a full federal deposit library. The library has a liberal interlibrary loan policy. She calls the State Library a "responsive network of skilled professionals."

Technology is used heavily. Excelsior Information System (the catalog) was launched this year and is available on the Internet 24 hours a day (telnet: nysl.nysed.gov). Staff developed the State Government Information Locator Service and the Legislative Intent Tutorial using hypercard. The Information Locator Service (http://unix2.nysed.gov/ils) is a joint project with State Archives and Records Administration. It uses the Internet to provide a single access point to information produced by state agencies, the State Legislature, and the Judiciary. The tutorial has been in use for about two years. It is devised for users who want to do basic, intermediate, or advanced legislative intent research. She reports, however, that most users are too impatient to use it. (The address is mentioned earlier in the description of Mr. Carter's remarks). The State Library also has a Web Site (http://www.nysl.nysed.gov), but your web browser must have telnet capability to access Excelsior.

Following Ms. Hargrave's presentation, tours of the State Library and State Archives were given. Funding cuts have resulted in closing the Archives and State Library reading room to the public for two one-half days per week. An interesting collection of the archives is the second largest collection of movie scripts in the country (55,000). At that time the law required movies to be approved by the state before they could be shown in the state. (That law was later ruled unconstitutional.) The State Library covers several floors, but the 7th is the prime area. There are "three football fields" of books in the basement. The library has over 100 CD-ROM databases. Reference staff used to specialize, but now they are consolidated.

SEMINAR SITE SELECTIONS -- WE WANT YOUR INPUT --- NOW IS YOUR CHANCE!!!!!

Would you like to host a Professional Development Seminar? Do you have any suggestions on sites for the Seminars? We are searching for invitations and sites to hold the Professional Development Seminar in October, 1997, and the following years. Thanks to Anne Rottman (MO) and Susan Gilley (OK) for valiantly serving as the site selection committee. They considered geographical location, and sizes of cities and libraries in making their suggestions. Additional suggestions were made at the Annual Meeting and the Seminar. Seminars are generally held in October or November. The sites and dates for annual NCSL meetings are also listed below:

Professional Development Seminars
Oct. 17-19, 1996 Washington, DC/Baltimore MD

(Suggested sites for 1997 and beyond)
Asheville, NC
Charlottesville, VA
Columbia, SC
Honolulu, HI
Santa Fe, NM
Springfield, IL

NCSL Annual Meetings
July 27-31, 1996 St. Louis, MO
Aug. 8-12, 1997 Philadelphia, PA
July 18-22, 1998 Las Vegas NV
July 24-29, 1999 Indianapolis, IN
July 15-19, 2000 Chicago, IL
Aug. 11-15,2001 San Antonio, TX
Let us know your choices and suggestions. We would love to hear from you via phone, mail, or e-mail (LRL Forum on NCSLnet or Internet e-mail). Contact Nancy Quesada (TX), Clare Cholik (SD) or Chris Patarozzi (NCSL). (See LRL Directory for numbers.) You will have the opportunity to vote when your Regional Coordinator contacts you. Also, please let your Regional Coordinator know if you would like to host a Seminar.

COORDINATORS' CORNER...

Questions for this issue of Newsline: 1. What are the "hot topics" in your legislature this year? 2. On which subjects have you been doing the most research? 3. What work-related goals do you have for the new year?

The Ohio Legislative Service Commission Library reports that tort reform continues to be debated. Library requests are quite varied and numerous lately. Many involve multi-state searches. LRL colleagues in Wisconsin and Quebec were very helpful. An unusual request concerned the Ultimate Fighting Championship, a "sporting event" that combines martial arts and boxing. Such fights are on cable television pay for view. The Mayor of Denver is a strong opponent of such events and canceled one recently scheduled for that city. The library purchased DB/Textworks and DB/Searchworks software from Inmagic and we plan to convert our Inmagic Plus databases (the book catalog and in-house legal memo file) to the new software.

COORDINATOR JEANNE M. BURKE, NE, REPORTS:

Jonetta Douglas, Iowa Legislative Services Bureau Library, related that research questions have been fairly broad this past year but "thanks to the Feds we are doing more stopping than starting right now. Like many others we are in a wait mode as federal cutbacks are decided."

She said, "Welfare reform is still big here as are tax breaks or, more specifically, property tax reform. Term limits will probably be coming up again. Possibly parental notification, and although we did some work on violence in schools it sounds like there could be more in 1996. Something that may be kind of interesting is the divorce law situation. Iowa has been a "no-fault divorce" state and there may be some effort to change that."

Jonetta's goals for the New Year: "This session all the members in the Senate will have access to the LAN at their desks, so we are going to get as much information as possible into the library's portion in order to increase our visibility. (I hope that's a good thing). We have been scanning the bill books for the library onto magnetic optical disk. We start with 1995 and this year I hope to catch up and be current from this point forward. We are just now getting into the 1976 bills."

Marilyn Cathcart, Minnesota Legislative Reference Library, offers these hot topics from her state: sports franchises, economic competitiveness & state subsidies (suggested acquisition: NO MORE CANDY STORE), impact of federal cuts, expansion of gambling, Indian treaty rights, child support & child support guidelines, education vouchers, negative campaign advertising, Medicaid managed care, insurance coverage for alternative medical treatments, global budget.

The Minnesota staff's work related goals: continuing to develop the legislative WWW for sites to add to the library's web site Links to the World, cataloging Internet sites, and training legislative staff on accessing good sites on the Internet.

Beth Furbush, Montana Legislative Library, writes that hot topics there are state-federal relations, states rights, civil rights, state-local relations, welfare and health care reforms/finance, juvenile justice/child welfare, privatization, school choice, tax policy and technology planning for improved management of state operations.

Their goals are: working with management toward an effective method for supporting the constantly changing technical demands of legislative research, defining library staff roles, and finding space and time to do her job without letting it take over her life.

When looking at the hot topics for the Nebraska Legislature, Jeanne M. Burke, Nebraska Legislative Reference Library, reports that the issues from the past year that seem to be the most popular were property taxes, welfare programs, gambling and crime. There are four proposed property tax related referendums being discussed in Nebraska: one by the legislature and three sponsored by other groups or individuals in the state. (You can see why we have done a great deal of work in this area!)

Since Nebraska applied and was granted permission to develop its own welfare plan this year, requests have abounded for information on locating successful programs, implementation costs, and how federal legislation will affect Nebraska's efforts in this area.
Gambling resurfaced again this year. Those who favor it wish to expand it and those who oppose it, wish to repeal previous legislation.

Nebraskans see crime as becoming increasingly violent and pervasive in the Heartland. Identifying ways of preventing crime and more effective means of punishing offenders has also occupied a large volume of our requests.

Regarding the second question on our goal for the New Year, Jeanne says the most pressing one is to get their new on-line catalog ready for use by the legislative staff. Another top goal for next year has to be the continuation of efforts to hone their collection and services to the legislature’s changing needs, especially in the area of technology. Next year promises to be one of growth and challenge. (At least it will be a short session!)

Marilyn Gutromson, North Dakota Legislative Library, and Deborah Priest, Director of the New York Assembly Information Center, will present recommendations to the LRL staff section at the 1996 Annual Meeting for creation of a Notable LRL Document Award. This is a means of promoting staff section participation in the State Information Network with NCSL and CSG and to encourage think tank organizations to make documents available to NCSL and CSG. The plans call for LRL members to vote on outstanding documents each year. Details will be roughed out this summer. That is, if the two “snow states” ever thaw out.

Marilyn also said one of her main hot topics this year deals with an issue familiar to many of us - flooding. Devils Lake in ND has no natural outlet and over the last couple of years the lake’s level has continued to rise. Pumping some of the water into a neighboring lake would be a temporary solution but the permanent solution would move the water into the Sheyenne River which empties into the Red River that flows north into Canada. Canada is worried about the impact this change will have on the river’s ecology and provincial fishing. Two other topics she mentioned included sex offender registration programs in other states, and parity in health insurance coverage for mental health and substance abuse treatment.

In the area of work-related goals for 1996, North Dakota plans to complete a major biennial project of converting bill draft files to microfiche. They are also preparing for the meeting of the 55th Legislative Assembly which convenes in January 1997. The Library staff is continuing to learn new computer skills with the advent of laptops.

COORDINATOR NAN BOWERS, NV, REPORTS:
Mary Pagenkopf, Alaska Legislative Reference Library, reports all legislative staff now have access to the Internet through their personal computers. The Legislative Research Section has been cut from 12 positions down to 5 positions, with the idea that legislators' personal staff will do more of their own research...on the Internet. The Alaska Legislature now has its own home page (http://www.legis.state.ak.us/local/akpages/LEGISLATURE/home/htm) in conjunction with the State of Alaska homepage. Also, an Alaska Legislature Textual Infobases homepage (http://www.legis.state.ak.us/) now contains bills, session laws, journals and committee minutes from the current session back through 1983, as well as the Alaska Statutes and Alaska Administrative Code.

Sharon Akey, California Bureau Library, says they’re still in the planning stages for an online catalog. She hasn’t been able to work on the project for several months, but it is an ongoing library goal.

Nan Bowers, Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau Library, reminds us that the Nevada Legislature meets biennially and will not convene until January 1997. Research topics getting a lot of attention lately include criminal sentencing, federal mandates, health and welfare reform. Library professional staff will increase from 2 to 3 people in 1996. Joel Guldner, currently at the Library of Michigan, will be joining the staff as of January 16th. Completing the serials and acquisitions components of the InMagic library database is a high priority for 1996. Construction has begun on an addition to the Legislative Building that will double the available floorspace. The Research Library, housed in the LCB office building a half block from the Legislative Building, will operate a library annex in the new building. Nan will be planning for equipment, furniture and services to be handled at the new site. The library annex will be next door to the legislative lounge and Nan feels sure that it will be heavily used by legislators and staff.

COORDINATOR RONA MERTINK, TX, REPORTS:
Carolyn Atwater, Senate Research in Arizona, says that they are feeling overwhelmed as their legislature just finished a special session! The big issue for the 1996 session will be school finance.

Marc Galbraith, Director of Reference Services at the Kansas State Library, said according to the Topeka Daily Capital the hot topics this session are going to be: school funding, reauthorization of the local property tax lid, repeal of 4.9 percent state sales tax on construction labor services used for
remodeling, exempting a portion of the appraised value of homes from the property tax (Homestead Property Tax Relief), higher speed limits, closing two state hospitals for mentally ill and mentally retarded, proposed constitutional amendment to allow electronic slot machines at pari-mutuel racetracks, and construction of a maximum security facility for juvenile offenders.

Marc said the library is working on: How to better communicate new acquisitions and services to legislators, how to assemble and publish a voter guide for Kansas elections (currently there is no statewide voters guide), and how to put up legislative files on their new web page. They also want to make FirstSearch available to legislators and other library users and do more legislative staff orientations.

Tracey Kimball with the Legislative Council Service Library in New Mexico says that her main goal for next year is to automate their catalog. They are going to use the database software In-magic to get online. Tracy has been contacted about the staff section’s mentoring program and is looking forward to participating in that. Also, the library has a new Assistant Librarian, Priscilla Lopez, who has replaced Ernestine Jones.

The Oklahoma Legislative Reference Division reports major issues for the 1996 Legislative session are expected to be: more budget cuts, mid-term funding adjustments to education (based on average attendance), educational technology, teacher preparation and performance incentives, school choice and moving authority to the local level. Other hot topics: prison overcrowding, new guards for existing prison facilities, funding for private prisons, and an Indian fuel tax.

Susan Gilley’s personal work-related goals for 1996 are: 1) to survive a move to smaller space and to create a more effective personal workspace there; 2) to show no fear in the face of technology; 3) to clean her office prior to the move, discarding at least a little.

Sally Reynolds, Director of the Legislative Reference Library in Texas, submitted the following report:

The Texas Legislature will not be in session this year. Our next regular session will convene in January, 1997. However, the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House have given charges to their respective standing committees to work on during the interim. These committees then file their reports before the next legislative session. Some of the charges so far are: juvenile driving while intoxicated laws, juvenile justice and child support, and charitable bingo. Texas is also involved in the redistricting case currently being argued in the U.S. Supreme Court. Depending on the outcome, this could necessitate a special session. All of these issues have been "hot topics" in our library for the last several months.

Our library is going through some exciting changes during this interim. Our online catalog is being enhanced, and we will be installing Windows 95 on our LAN. We are also investigating bar-coding our collection. We will also be adding our homepage to the Internet in the very near future. The Library is also considering putting our daily clipping service on an internal web server, which would make it available to all the members and their staff within minutes of when it is prepared, instead of having a printed copy.

We have had some staff changes recently, as well. Caroline Geer and Sara Hellman have joined our Reference staff. Nancy Hays is our new Texas Documents Librarian.

COORDINATOR MARIAN ROGERS, WI, REPORTS:

Marian Rogers, Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau, says that her next submission to the NEWSLINE will be via Internet e-mail. She’s going to take the giant step onto the information highway and move into the 21st century!

Their hot topics are: Wisconsin Works (W-2) welfare reform, juvenile justice code, professional sports (Milwaukee Brewers) stadium financing, local government regulation of firearms, retail wheeling, expansion of the school choice program and limited liability partnerships. These topics have generated numerous research requests.

Their main goal for 1996 is to get their newly-installed on-line catalog up and running. They are currently in the process of conducting an inventory, discarding outdated materials, processing cards for retroconversion, etc. They also intend to barcode the collection, automate their acquisitions process and improve serials management. Training staff will also be a prime project.
NCSL PUBLICATIONS

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

BOOKS
Creative Solution Funding the Arts (Item 2112)
1994 Directory of State Toxic Contacts (Item 4644)
Environmental Justice (Item 4645)
1995-96 Lead Poisoning Prevention: A Directory of State Contacts (Item 4648)
Environmental Management Directory of Key Contacts (Item 4649)
1995 State Tax and Budget Action (Item 5328)
1995 State Legislative Summary: Children, Youth and Family (Item 6135)
24 Hour Symposium Book (Item 6651)
1995 Campaign Finance Lobbying and Ethics Legislation (Item 7144)
1996 Election Results Directory Supplement (Item 9371)
1995 State Legislation on Native American Issues (Item 9374)

LEGISBRIEFS
Collaborating for Kids (Item 9000-0333)
New American Schools Development Corporation (Item 9000-0334)
The Debate Over “Any Willing Provider” (Item 9000-0335)
Electric Utility Competition (Item 9000-0336)
Environmental Justice (Item 9000-0337)
Indian Tribal Gaming (Item 9000-0338)
Registration and Notification of Sex Offenders (Item 9000-0339)
Federal Tax Reform and the States (Item 9000-0340)
School Districts as Entrepreneurs (Item 9000-0341)
NAFTA and State Environmental Laws (Item 9000-0342)
Educating Youth About HIV/AIDS (Item 9000-0343)
Affirmative Action (Item 9000-0344)
The Unfounded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Item 9000-0401)
Trends in Domestic Violence Legislation (Item 9000-0402)
Labor Laws and School-to-Work Programs (Item 9000-0403)
Long-Term Care for the Elderly (Item 9000-0404)
Alternatives to Traditional Redistricting (Item 9000-0405)
Privatization of State Corrections Management (Item 9000-0406)
Measuring Performance Improves Budgeting (Item 9000-0407)
Campaign Contribution Limits on Individuals (Item 9000-0408)
Time Limits in Welfare Reform (Item 9000-0409)
Term Limits Update (Item 9000-0410)
Health Care for Migrant Farmworkers (Item 9000-0411)
Workers’ Compensation: 24-Hour Coverage - An Update (Item 9000-0412)

LEGISLATIVE FINANCE PAPERS
1995 State Tax Action (Item 5101-0099)
1995 State Budget Action (Item 5101-0100)
State Fiscal Outlook for 1996 (Item 5101-0101)

STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORTS
NAFTA and its Effect on State Environmental Policies (Item 7302-2010)
When School Districts Become Entrepreneurs: Opportunity or Danger (Item 7302-2011)
Managed Health Care: Problems and Promises (Item 7302-2012)
State Efforts to Manage Low-Level Radioactive Wastes (Item 7302-2013)
On the Road with NAFTA (Item 7302-2014)
Proposed Changes to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (Item 7302-2015)
Crime and Sentencing State Enactments 95 (Item 7302-2016)
Juvenile Crime and Justices State Enactment 95 (Item 7302-2017)
Organization and Regulation of the Electric Industry (Item 7302-2018)
Changing Electric Markets (Item 7302-2019)
Strandable Commitments in the Electric Industry (Item 7302-2020)
Competing Utilities and Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy and Low-Income Customer (Item 7302-2021)
Performance-Based Regulation in the Electric Industry (Item 7302-2022)

Transportation Series
Intelligent Transportation in America: Prospects and Perils (Item 4000-0101)

LRL DIRECTORY
(Nota: The directory is in the process of being updated and should be available by March.)

OHIO
Change the name Jennifer Casey to Jennifer Ingersoll-Casey.
NEXT ISSUE OF NEWSLINE

The deadline for the Spring edition of NEWSLINE is April 1, 1996. Send news about your library or significant legislative events in your state to your regional coordinator or Chris Pattarozzi at NCSL, Denver.

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