Chair's Column

Shelley Day, Legislative Research Library, Utah

"One kind word can warm three winter months."
—Japanese Proverb

This proverb is especially significant to me because I tutor a refugee from Iraq and am witnessing the difficulties that she and other refugees encounter while integrating into a new country and culture. The many kind gestures directed their way make deep impressions on me as though each giver is saying, "Welcome to your new home in America."

A warm welcome inevitably softens any storm and promises protection from whatever the source. None is so true than our mighty LRL staff section members who weather storms well and deliver requested services in the most torrential moments with welcome hearts and minds. To read about, listen to and watch LRL staffers being recognized for valuable contributions to the legislative process is always a warm welcome too!

NCSL has offered numerous and beneficial e-learning opportunities while our economy has mandated what feels like house arrest. The two webinars that LRL sponsored last fall have paved the way for another one this year that will address databases for statutorily mandated reports. Thanks to Anne Rottman for suggesting the idea. In addition, the LRL Executive Committee is discussing possibilities regarding another webinar, a roundtable e-meeting exclusively for LRL members, social networking options, and effective ways to increase our attendance at the Legislative Annual Summit in Texas this August. I’ll forever be grateful to Robbie LaFleur who invited me in 2002 to be a panel participant at the PDS in North Dakota. That ensured my attendance (I hadn’t otherwise considered it a reality) and continued involvement with LRL. Please consider attending the Summit this year. You know how Texas does things BIG, and we’re planning excellent sessions, all specific to LRL interests!

Regional coordinators joined in and provided insights to our LRL Executive Committee conference call in January, and they will join us again in the near future. A big thanks to them! They are finding innovative and personable approaches to correspond with you in each state. I hope you use them to voice your needs too. Thank you for contributing articles and photos and introducing yourself on a personal level via the Newsline. Your extra time and effort are appreciated! And thanks to our NCSL LRL staff section liaison

(continued on page 2)
Heather Morton, who continues to give us sound advice and keep us informed and organized.

It’s time to bid adieu to those BIG winter storms and embrace spring with a calmness as we meet new challenges and make new commitments. Through my valuable relationships with you, I’m dedicated to strengthening the visibility of our services within state legislatures. Most importantly your suggestions on how our staff section can best serve you are needed and welcome. Think BIG!

Shelley

Library Profile:
Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library

By John Barden, Maine

The Law and Legislative Reference Library in Augusta, Maine, is one of the nonpartisan offices of the Maine Legislature. Its primary mission is to ensure that Maine’s legislators have access to the resources they need to make informed decisions on the matters before them. Beyond that, it serves the legal information needs of the Judicial Branch, Executive Branch agencies, and Maine citizens.

Maine’s state collection of legal materials dates to 1839, when the Legislature established the Maine State Library to build a comprehensive law library and collect books about the state’s history and people. The state library was housed in various rooms of the State House until 1971, when it moved to a newly constructed Cultural Building. At the same time, the Law Department of the state library was reconstituted as the Law and Legislative Reference Library and remained in the state library’s former quarters on the second floor of the State House, its present home.

The Law and Legislative Reference Library (“Law Library,” for short—the full name is a tongue-twister!) is the official state law library, and the director serves as state law librarian. There are presently 13 staff members: six professional and seven paraprofessional/administrative. Several staff have been here more than 20 years, and their experience is a major reason for the law library’s success in meeting its mission.

Approximately 109,000 volumes are in the collection, including many rare and unique items related to the state’s early history, as well as the usual array of treatises, law journals, codes, etc. We are the only federal depository library in Maine’s capital region. We maintain comprehensive files of Maine’s session laws, revised statutes (i.e., codes), legislative documents (i.e., bills), journals of proceedings, and debates. Our collection of committee files, including copies of committee testimony, dates to the early 1980s. One hallmark collection is the clippings file, dating to the 1960s, which contains newspaper articles on legislation, legislators, and matters affecting the legislative process.

Our website has been a major vehicle for reaching out to the public across the state. We feature a “What Is Maine’s Law On ...” section that enables web patrons to bypass the reference desk for frequently asked questions. Even more popular are the pages we add on hot topics, such as Maine’s evolving medical marijuana law, the new statewide building code, and, of course, the state budget.

As with many legislative reference libraries, we are regularly called upon to provide legislative and statutory histories, which we do not only for legislators and legislative offices, but also for the courts, members of the bar, and, indeed, for any citizen who requests it. In line with our mission to serve the public, we field reference calls and e-mails from many citizens and try to connect them with primary legal information that will answer their needs. Many patrons contact us through the “Ask a Law Librarian” reference request form on our website. We respond to approximately 500 reference requests per month. We reach out to our legislative patrons with an occasional newsletter highlighting new resources and services.

The biggest change in our operations in the past few years is related to digitized resources. In the past, we routinely scanned bills, laws, debate, committee files—you name it—and discarded the files once the materials had been delivered to the patrons. We frequently scanned the same materials over and over again. About two years ago, we developed scanning standards for various resources and started “banking” our scans for reuse. We also are scanning

(continued on page 3)
entire runs of heavily requested materials in anticipation of need. The result is a higher quality electronic product that often is already available when the request is received.

Our eventual goal is to add many of these materials to our website once we reach a “critical mass.” Last year, we scanned the pre-1954 editions of the Revised Statutes. This year, the focus is on session laws. However, we are not averse to responding to emergency needs (“Oops! Our last copy of the 1897 Legislative Record is falling apart!”) or opportunities (“A law firm is getting rid of their run of legislative bills and amendments and wants to know whether we can scan them to provide them (and us) with an electronic replacement.”).

In coming years, we hope to make legal and legislative information more accessible, not only to our primary patrons in Augusta, but also to the public at large in a new, user-friendly, web-based format. At the same time, we will preserve and protect our unique collection of Maine legislative materials. Feedback on our modest efforts thus far has been tremendous, and we have noted with pleasure the enthusiasm with which the Legislature and other patrons are receiving the results.

State News

By LRL Regional Coordinators

From Brooke Daly and Mary Pagenkopf, Alaska:

On Jan. 18, 2011, the 27th Alaska State Legislature convened, shifting library activities into high gear. Last fall, the 2010 edition of the Alaska Statutes was published. At the beginning of each two-year legislature, we are responsible for distributing these new sets of Alaska Statutes and bound prior year session laws to all 40 representatives, 20 senators, and numerous legislative offices.

We have just launched a new outreach effort in the form of online “quick start manuals” to facilitate use of our legislative databases, both on the Internet and on the Legislature’s local area network. “Tips for Researching Alaska Legislative History,” available on the Publications page of the Legislature’s website, includes “Steps to Using Infobases.” Enthusiastic callers have told us how much the manuals help them learn to search these complex databases. With better-prepared researchers, we can more easily guide callers through legislative history searches.

For several years, we have worked with the IT department of the Legislative Affairs Agency and legislative aides to get committee documents relating to a bill onto BASIS (Bill Action Status Inquiry System) on the legislative website. In 2009, committee aides began posting some of the documents that comprise a committee bill file. This year, we are working to process, scan and post the complete 2009-2010 bill files along with the individual documents that previously were posted. Sometime in 2011-2012, the official digitized floor audio also will be added to BASIS, so researchers will be able to find all legislative history materials on a bill on its bill history/action page.

From Janet Fisher, Arizona:

After 14 years of leading the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records, GladysAnn Wells will retire as State Librarian. GladysAnn has been the director and state librarian of the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records since 1997, and has led efforts in the statewide collaboration of libraries, archives, public records and museums. The Arizona State Library has been recognized for excellence in e-government by the Library of Congress and successfully completed a premiere State Archives and

(continued on page 4)
History preservation, treatment and access facility. The state library also has raised over $61 million for Arizona since 1997. A nationwide search for a new state librarian is expected later this year; Janet Fisher will serve as acting state librarian until that time.

Short Bio: Janet Fisher is director of the Law and Research Library at the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records. She oversees the state library’s research staff and collections in the areas of Arizona state publications, federal publications, law and genealogy. Janet is an active member of the library community as a member of the Arizona Association of Law Libraries (AzALL), Arizona Library Association (AzLA), American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) and American Library Association.

From Maeve Roche, California:

Greetings from California! We had a lovely false spring at the beginning of February, but now winter is back with us again—lots of rain and snow have come our way in the last week. This type of weather makes me wish I could stay at home all day with a cup of tea and a good book. Currently, I’m reading In Dubious Battle, by John Steinbeck for my book club. It tells the story of apple pickers going on strike and attempting to unionize in California in the 1930s. This book was a precursor to The Grapes of Wrath—you’ll find a lot of the themes regarding poverty and worker struggles from that classic novel in this book, too. I have also been somewhat distracted by another book, Unbroken, by Laura Hillenbrand, and hope to get back to that one once I finish the Steinbeck book. So many good books, so little time …

From Johanne Greer, Maryland:

The Maryland Department of Legislative Services Library is very busy with research requests since the General Assembly started session January 12. The session will last for 90 days, ending on April 11. In January, the reference librarians handled more than 686 requests from members, staff, other state agencies, and the public. We have already had a marathon hearing on a same-sex marriage bill. Other controversial measures include a medical marijuana bill and, of course, the state budget.

If the budget allows, the library will recruit for a cataloger in the spring. Otherwise, no changes have occurred in library staff. Exciting news in the reference section: one of the librarians is expecting a baby girl in May, and the baby who was born during session last year to one of our catalogers will be 1 year old next month.

From Tracey Kimball, New Mexico:

Although New Mexico’s budget gap—currently estimated at about $200 million—is small potatoes compared to many states, it’s playing as a hot potato in our current session. We have the fewest bills introduced in a 60-day session in many years, and the public pace was slow while the caucuses and leadership struggled to find agreement on whether to cut back the film-production tax rebate, by how much and for how long to increase public employees’ pension contributions. Last fall’s election brought a larger percentage of Republicans—47 percent—into the New Mexico House than we have had since 1953. Democrats are in the majority in both chambers, but the narrowed gap in the House and a new Republican governor are bringing changes. Other hot issues this session are education reform, driver’s licenses for immigrants, reorganization of state agencies, campaign financing and various “sunshine” portals for government information. And, as former a British MP noted 25 years ago, “One doesn’t know how many hot potatoes will appear on the horizon.”

Short Bio: Tracey has been the full-time librarian at the New Mexico Legislative Council Service since 1995. She served a rotation of LRL offices from 2003-2007 and hosted professional development seminars in 1997 and 2007.
From Debbie Tavenner, Ohio:

The library is making great strides with the recently purchased software from Inmagic. I cannot say too many times how important the consultations with LRL librarians using Inmagic were for obtaining the approval for purchasing and for ideas on how to use it. The software is used for a research memos database and the library’s general catalog. Users for the first time can link to the full text of the research memo within the research memos database. In the general catalog, we have added links to websites for documents and created our own digital archive for selected publications.

As one sign of the times, a library support staff person retired, and the LSC director is postponing a decision on replacement. Subscriptions are being scrutinized carefully and cancelled if there’s any question about their relevance to work. Some non-library staff members have decided to recycle their personal copies of Business Week and USA Today to the library as a way to keep some current material on the shelves for browsing.

As with most legislatures, the Ohio General Assembly began its 129th Session in January. The House, and Senate majority and governor are Republican. The first bill to pass, H.B. 1, created JobsOhio, an initiative of Governor John Kasich intended to spur job development. Hearings on S.B. 5 to make changes to collective bargaining have attracted large crowds, but not quite the size of the crowds in Wisconsin. H.B. 69, which makes changes to the public retirement system, also is a major bill being considered. Ohio’s main operating budget must be introduced by March 15. Press reports indicate Ohio will have a deficit of at least $8 billion.

From Christine Chen, Oklahoma:

Due to budget shortfalls, our new governor (first female governor) and Legislature are working toward saving state money by consolidating state agencies. The Oklahoma Department of Libraries is included in one bill. If it passes, we will be consolidated into the Office of State Finance with six other agencies. We don’t know what will happen, but just hope for the best!!

Short bio: I was born and raised in Taiwan. I came to the United States and graduated from Emporia State University with a MLS degree. I moved to Oklahoma, got married and had twin girls who are now high school juniors. I have worked for the Oklahoma Department of Libraries since 2000 and became the legislative librarian in 2008. I enjoy my work because every day is a challenge. I also enjoy reading and listening to music.

From Shelley Day, Utah:

In addition to constituent services (averaging 600 responses during session) and traditional library operations, including training session interns, new employees, and the public, I serve as:

- State Coordinator for America’s Legislators Back to School Program;
- Utah State Legislature website content designer and webmaster;
- Utah State Library Board Member (serving my second four-year term); and
- Coordinator of archival procedures for our office’s legislative records (13 series).

Short Bio: I taught sixth to ninth grade students in the public and private sectors for a decade; just completed my 20th legislative session; own a small business (uh, expensive hobby); and love cold white snow and sunny blue skies . . . but I knew we’ve had enough winter when I saw this photo . . .
State News (continued from page 5)

From Marian Rogers, Wisconsin:

The Wisconsin Legislature’s 2011-2012 session began in January with a special session focused on jobs development and economic recovery. Out of 20 special session bills introduced, eight were enacted. Soon a budget adjustment bill will be introduced, followed later in February by a biennial budget bill.

In June 2010, Wisconsin State Documents Librarian Arden Rice accepted a position as systems analyst in the IT department at Madison Area Technical College [now called Madison College]. Legislative Librarian Eileen Snyder, who has been a member of the library staff since 2004, now serves as State Documents Librarian.

Late in the morning on December 22, we encountered every librarian’s nightmare: a water leak dripping on books! The leak in our storage room (water dripping from a restaurant icemaker) soaked our collection of older, duplicate volumes of the Laws of Wisconsin. Quick triage action by library staff moved the damaged and undamaged books out of harm’s way. We contacted a freeze-dry book recovery facility in Illinois, properly packed the books, and sent them on their way by the end of the day. While we were sorry this happened, we were glad we had time to handle the situation before our office, as well as the recovery facility, closed for the holidays.

Library Profile:
South Carolina Legislative Council Reference Library

By Kim Adams, South Carolina

Created by Act 294 of 1949 (§2-11-10), the Legislative Council is responsible for the organization and operation of the research, reference, and bill drafting facilities to serve the General Assembly. The Council also codifies and publishes the general and permanent statutory laws of this state in appropriate supplements and volumes (§2-13-30). All duties and responsibilities of the State Library were devolved upon the Legislative Council to be maintained as the Legislative Library by §2-11-70. The responsibility for the State Register was assigned to the Council by provisions of Act 176 of 1977.

The above description was taken from the South Carolina Legislative Manual, which can be found on www.scstatehouse.gov.

Below is the statute that addresses the responsibilities of the Legislative Council Reference Library:
§2-11-70—Maintenance of Legislative Library. The Legislative Council shall, in addition to its other functions, maintain a Legislative Library which shall consist of the Codes of Laws of the several states and legislative documents of the State of South Carolina along with other materials deemed necessary in connection with its function and for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly.

We are mainly a reference library; no material is available to lend. The reference library is used primarily by Legislative Council and General Assembly staff for research. Our library is unique in that we house legislative materials dating from the 1700s to the present. The Legislative Council Reference Library’s goal is to provide the members of the South Carolina General Assembly and their staff with accurate reference and research materials in a timely manner. The Reference Library also is responsible for the distribution, invoicing/billing and collection of payments for parent volumes of the South Carolina Code of Laws and its annual supplements to state agencies, county and city entities, and other research libraries throughout the country. The Reference Library also distributes other statute-mandated publications, such as The South Carolina Reports. These reports are distributed to all retired and active circuit and family court judges, and several other state agencies for research.

Some information that is available in print form in our library:

- Senate journals dating from 1831 to present;
- House journals dating from 1782 to present;

(continued on page 7)
Library Profile: South Carolina (continued from page 6)

- *Journal of the Common House of Assembly* dating 1739 to 1750;
- *South Carolina Legislative Manuals* from 1913 to present;
- Acts and Joints, and Reports and Resolutions from 1802 to present (which are annotated by our research staff each year to reflect any amendments to originating acts);
- *South Carolina Reports*; and
- A copy of each publication of the Code, along with each supplement.

Our staff also has access to various electronic databases that can be used to search multi-state codes and other general legal information.

Here is a short biography of the three members of the research staff for Legislative Council:

Deirdre M. Brevard-Smith-Editor of the *State Register*. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of South Carolina and a Master’s in Business Administration from Webster University. She provides backup research support in addition to being the editor of the *State Register*. She has been a dedicated employee of the Legislative Council for 26 years.

Elizabeth C. Taylor-Director of Research. Elizabeth is head of the research department. She works daily to facilitate research requests from our staff, members of the General Assembly and their staff. During our legislative session (which begins the second Tuesday in January and concludes the first Thursday in June), Elizabeth works on the House and Senate floors, enabling her to interact personally with each member of the General Assembly. She is a graduate of the University of South Carolina.

Kim P. Adams-Assistant Director of Research and Index Supervisor. Her responsibilities include indexing all the introduced bills each day. This provides our staff with a research tool that allows for easy bill look-up. She also handles all the distribution, invoicing/billing and collection of payments for parent volumes of the *South Carolina Code of Laws* and its annual supplements to state agencies, county and city entities, and other research libraries throughout the country. She facilitates distribution of the *South Carolina Reports*. She also provides backup research support. Kim received an undergraduate degree from the University of South Carolina and will graduate with a Master’s in Business Administration from Southern Wesleyan University next December.

The three of us work together to keep our reference library updated with the latest publications.

2011 LRL Professional Development Seminar Postponed

By Heather Morton, NCSL

In January and February, the LRL Executive Committee sent a survey to LRL members, foreign libraries and interested parties regarding attendance at the upcoming 2011 Legislative Summit and LRL Professional Development Seminar. Thirty-eight responses were received and tabulated. The results showed that the state fiscal situation continues to be difficult and many states continue under travel bans. The numbers who would be able to travel to the fall seminar were very low again this year.

The LRL Executive Committee looked at the possibility of meeting in Denver on our own and in Virginia in conjunction with two other staff sections. After reviewing the responses, the LRL Executive Committee voted to postpone the 2011 Professional Development Seminar and urge members to attend the Legislative Summit, if possible. The LRL Executive Committee appreciates that Colorado and Virginia both were willing to host the meeting and is in discussions to resume the Professional Development Seminar in 2012.
NCSL Publications

Reports:

- Public-Private Partnerships for Transportation: A State Legislator’s Toolkit—Rall/Reed (WEB)
- Transportation Review: 2010 Legislation—Savage et al. (WEB)
- Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting—Farquhar
- Hydraulic Fracturing: What’s the Big Fracking Deal?—Pless/Verdi (WEB)
- State Tax Actions 2011—Rafool/Haggerty (WEB)
- Reversing the Trend in Childhood Obesity—Morandi/Shinkle/Winterfeld
- A Path to Graduation for Every Child: State Legislative Roles and Responsibilities—Deyé
- Improving College Completion: Remedial Education—Bautsch (WEB)

LegisBriefs:

January 2011

- Tobacco Cessation in Medicaid and Employee Programs—Vol. 19, No. 1
- Primary Seat Belt Laws—Vol. 19, No. 2
- Expanding HIV/AIDS Prevention Efforts—Vol. 19, No. 3
- National Board Certification for Principals—Vol. 19, No. 4
- The Vexing Problem of Sexting—Vol. 19, No. 5
- Early Childhood Advisory Councils—Vol. 19, No. 6

February 2011

- Community Health Centers—Vol. 19, No. 7
- Helping Working Families Build Financial Security—Vol. 19, No. 8
- Motorcycle Safety—Vol. 19, No. 9
- International Disease Classification - ICD-10—Vol. 19, No. 10
- Carbon Capture and Storage—Vol. 19, No. 11