

ORAL Newsletter

Ohio Regional Association
of Law Libraries

December 1987

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WHERE ARE OUR LIBRARIES GOING: 1977 TO DATE?

At last, computer assisted legal research seems to be penetrating the every day practice of law. A faculty member recently visited a very rural county in southern Ohio. The bench and bar consists of one judge and thirteen lawyers. For several years the county has been unable to buy supplements for the county law library. To off-set this deficiency, the lawyers and judge have purchased microcomputers to access LEXIS and WESTLAW. There are two or three lawyers who like to do research online, and they do most of the work for the entire bar. Electronic mail is used between lawyers and the court. In a seemingly backwoods county, the local bar uses the most sophisticated and up-to-date methods of doing legal research and practicing law!

In 1977, when I first came to Akron, we had no LEXIS or WESTLAW terminals. In fact, I had never even seen one in law school. Today the University of Akron has four terminals plus access through numerous microcomputers. A fifth terminal is about to be installed. Akron also uses Legal Trac with its associated optical

digital disc technology and Wilson Disc with CD-ROM. Every librarian has a microcomputer, as does virtually every faculty member. Some of the library technicians have microcomputers of their own, and all technicians have some familiarity with micros. OCLC has taken over much of the work in cataloging and interlibrary loan. We can access the University Library's catalog online through our micros and WESTLAW terminals. Students use microcomputers for word processing and for computer based instruction. Professors use microcomputers as electronic blackboards in class.

Computer products and technology improve all the time. LEXIS recently announced that they will provide pagination for their online material. Not to be outdone, WESTLAW now includes star paging to the printed reporters. Many law libraries can now do without parts of the National Reporter System on their shelves. Lawyers can use LEXIS or WESTLAW without having to look up page numbers in the reporters for their citations.

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CALENDAR

Jan. 1, 1988:	Assume New Committee Assignments
Jan. 7-10:	AALS-Miami Beach
March 7:	Newsletter Copy Deadline-1st Issue
May 25-27:	ORALL-Spring Meeting-Cleveland
June 6:	Newsletter Copy Deadline-2nd Issue
June 26-29:	AALL-Atlanta
Sept. 5:	Newsletter Copy Deadline-3rd Issue
Oct.:	ORALL Fall Meeting-Indianapolis
Nov. 28:	Newsletter Copy Deadline-4th Issue

President's Message

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With such enhancements, are we approaching an electronic library where no one uses the books? I think so. Many of us already work in libraries where the physical space assigned to the library is limited now and is never going to increase. In these libraries, the only way to increase the availability of legal information is to use microforms and electronic media (either onsite or via telecommunication lines).

Unfortunately, the electronic version of printed material runs a very poor second to actually having a book in hand. In general, I think that when I know which legal information source to consult and the source is a book or multi-volume set with a good index, my research is much more efficient with the books than with the computer. On the other hand, in situations where we don't have the book readily available or where we don't know what book to look in, the computer assisted legal research systems are valuable research tools.

In addition to giving access to otherwise unavailable materials, the computer is also wonderful at looking for needles in hay stacks. However, once the "needle" is found, the "sewing" becomes difficult online. Reading computer screens is very slow and frustrating. Until computer screens display the equivalent of two or more printed pages at a time and computer printout quality is equivalent to that of the printed page, doing research on microcomputers will be less efficient and more difficult than opening a book.

These display and printing problems will be solved in the next few years, given the way microcomputer technology is progressing. Already, high resolution screens and laser printers are available but at a cost beyond most libraries' reach.

Another nagging (and costly) problem for online research is the necessity to use communication lines. It's great to get the latest information, but telephone lines are expensive and subject to problems. All the daily searchers on WESTLAW or LEXIS use only a handful of main frame computers. Research can be slow because many other people are using the system at the same time.

This problem may have a solution. Within five to seven years much of our current online research will be done locally using CD-ROMs, optical, digital discs and other storage devices. Users will depend on this new technology and will only go online to check the last month, quarter, or year for new developments. If users are accessing the services just for updating rather than hunting online, it should be easier for vendors to provide quick online service. Using online searching to complement other research should encourage people to use computer assisted legal research since the time clock or meter will not be running for the bulk of the research.

In the near future our libraries will be housing more equipment to accommodate the research technologies. Our book collections will start to stabilize or decrease in size to make way for the equipment. Rent and space limitations will not permit most of our libraries to house large collections of books as well as scores of microcomputer based legal research work stations. The next question will be if lawyers have a LEXIS or WESTLAW terminal on their desk, do they still need us? More about that later.

Paul Richert
ORALL President



ORALL Executive Boards, past & present: L-R Brenda Woodruff (past), Ted Potter (present), Mary Persyn (present), Paul Richert (President), Carol Allred (present), Mary Grace Hune (Secretary), Anita K. Shew (past), Marth Cox (past). Present members not shown are: Michael Slinger (Vice President) and Ruth Long (Treasurer).

INFORMATION: THE LAWYER/LIBRARIAN CONNECTION

The Northeast Regional Conference in Albany, NY was an interesting meeting for all who attended, not only for the programs offered, but also for the unique combination of regional chapters in attendance. People had the opportunity to attend programs which had the qualities of national programs and to meet with librarians from many chapters on a much smaller scale than the national meeting. It was a good combination of high quality and smaller quantity. The programs were well attended, for the most part, and well received. The following articles contain summaries of some of the programs, with the purpose of informing you as to the lawyer/librarian connection.



Exciting Albany! Here are two ORALL members having a wonderful time at the Northeast Regional Conference: L-R Mary Persyn, Director of the Law Library at Valparaiso University School of Law and Brenda Woodruff, Director of the Toledo Law Association Library.

LINDA WERTHEIMER NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO

The opening luncheon was the official beginning of the conference and it was well attended. The scheduled speaker was to be Nina Totenberg, National Public Radio Legal Correspondent. However, this was at the time when the President was to decide whether Judge Bork should withdraw from consideration for Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, and so she had to stay in Washington to cover that story. In her place, NPR sent Linda Wertheimer, the National Political Correspondent, who spoke on the political situation in Washington.

The main thrust of Ms. Wertheimer's speech was on the Reagan years. She spoke of the "magic" of the times, from the beginning of Mr. Reagan's presidency up to the breaking of the Iran-Contra Scandal. Washington was a magical city for those first five and a half years because Mr. Reagan brought with him a re-newed sense of America. The magic died in November, 1986, when information on the diversion of funds to the Contras became public. At that point, the Reagan Administration began to lose its power.

The Iran-Contra Hearings were something like Watergate Redux, but in many ways this was a much more serious problem. Watergate, in

essence, was a third-rate burglary connected to the highest levels of government, the purpose of which was to gather political information. The Iran-Contra situation was a case of foreign policy for our nation being handled by privateers, whose motives were patriotic, but whose ultimate goal was to profit from the sale of government arms and supplies. The hearings which were to follow the revelations were graphic examples of the Constitution in action, a particularly good time since this is the 200th anniversary of the writing of that document. It became the job of the Congress to investigate the actions of the Executive Branch representatives and to make sure they were within Constitutional bounds. These hearings were much more serious than Watergate; after all, a part of the foreign policy of the nation was not being handled by the White House, but by private actors using government contacts to achieve their goals.

What of the future in Washington? As one can see by the elections in November, 1986, the republicans have lost control of Congress but can the Democrats do anything with their advantage? From the list of Democratic contenders, whose ranks seem to get smaller
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Linda Wertheimer
National Public Radio

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every week, it would appear that no one has a strong enough following to win an election. Jesse Jackson is leading in the polls but problems await him at the convention. The others are not well known or have only regional appeal.

What of the Republicans? Ms. Wertheimer suggested that the nomination is George Bush's to lose - it will depend on the campaign. If he were to falter, Senator Robert Dole is waiting in the wings to take up the banner.

What will be the issues? The deficits, both in spending and trade, will be major issues of this campaign, as well as a catastrophic illness bill, which will be pushed by many constituencies, notably the baby boomers, because of the impact it has across age and political lines.

The speech was well received because of its fairness to all sides of questions presented. Ms. Wertheimer deftly answered a few questions from the audience and then withdrew to appreciative applause.

Prepared by Theodore A. Potter
University of Toledo Law Library

COMMERCIAL SOFTWARE IN THE LAW LIBRARY

Commercial Software in the Law Library was coordinated and moderated by Kit Kreilick of Fordham University Law Library.

Members of the panel were Virginia Wise, University of Michigan Law School; Teresa Wrenn, Webster & Sheffield, New York; and Julie Lim, CUNY Law School at Queens College.

Panel members discussed needs as they arose in their specific libraries and how they satisfied those needs with various software packages available on a commercial basis.

Ms. Lim introduced the audience to the MacDraw system with the use of overheads and handouts. She described how her library prepared maps, diagrams and newsletters, along with library user-guides. She explained the ease of use and expressed enthusiasm with the simplicity of the process. The laser printer is preferred over dot matrix for the quality of copy. In her handouts, Ms. Lim presented copies of users' guides, which included the integration of maps and text to simplify the location of publications.

She stated, "Macintosh 'Desktop Publishing Bundle' is sold to schools for \$5,300. It includes everything you need except the hard disk."

The second discussion centered on usage of Dbase III+, by Virginia Wise. She stressed that this is not a simple package to use, that it takes considerable time to learn, but in the long run she is satisfied with its performance.

This process provides a variety of functions and they are described in the publication, Essential Guide to DBase III Plus in Libraries, by Karl Beiser, Meckler Publ. Corp., Westport, CT, 1987.

Also she advised reference to Understanding DBase III Plus, by Alan Simpson, Sybex, Inc., Alameda, CA, 1986.

Ms. Wise stated that you will want to ask yourself various questions as you prepare to equip your library, such as, "What is available from various vendors?" "Are instructions available?" and "Can I get immediate help from those vendors?" She advised taking a long look at your needs before making the final purchase.

The final system was Nutshell, described by Teresa Wrenn. This system was put into use following a bad experience in which a great deal of money was paid for a system that was not operable by this office. The Nutshell system proved to be considerably less expensive and a more "workable" solution.

Ms. Wrenn explained the Nutshell package with a packet of handouts as well as a list of the various functions which they used within their system such as cataloging, maintaining shelf-lists, keeping track of serials and

acquisitions, routing publications, as well as many other uses.

She stressed that this is not an accounting system; that it is difficult to change fields; and in many cases the punctuation fields are not correct. However, the ease of use and the relatively small cost involved make this system especially attractive to the small library.

All panelists agreed that each library has to assess its own needs and make its decisions based upon those needs.

*Prepared by Rose Brown
Defiance County Law Library*

CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

One of the most interesting programs of the Albany meeting was a discussion of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Professor Peter W. Hogg, Professor of Law at Osgoode Hall Law School of York University, spoke on the Charter itself and Professor Balfour J. Halevy, Professor of Law and Law Librarian at the same institution, discussed the bibliography of the Charter.

Professor Hogg began by going through the history of the Charter. The British North America Act of 1867 created the independent federal parliamentary state government of Canada. The document which served as the Canadian Constitution did not contain a bill of rights because the British did not have a bill of rights. By 1945, at the end of World War II, a movement began to adopt a bill of rights. By 1960, a Canadian Bill of Rights became statutory law and applied to the federal government but not to the provinces. In 1982, the Canadians had a constitutional reform and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms became part of the Canadian Constitution.

The Charter looks a great deal like the American Bill of Rights but has significant limitations. Section 1 sets the tone for the rest of the document by saying that the rights enumerated are guaranteed, subject to

"reasonable limits prescribed by law . . . as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society." Professor Hogg explained that this means the rights are guaranteed in accord with principles of fundamental justice. For example, if a provincial law burdens any of the rights, the law is not automatically rejected because the state is allowed to prove that it is a reasonable limit justified in a free and democratic society.

One of the major limitations to the Charter is Sec. 33, which allows the suspension of any of the rights by a clear declaration within a statute. Apparently, in order for the Constitution to pass, the provinces required this clause be included so that important provincial considerations could be taken into account. Professor Hogg indicated that the section would largely be unused because of the political unpopularity of its use. However, it could be used by a majority to pass laws on highly controversial issues which could have a large impact on the people. The Charter is an interesting document and worth a look.

Professor Halevy then discussed the bibliography of the Charter. He handed out a microfiche of what he considered to be a "reasonable" representation of the Osgoode Hall Law Library holdings on the Charter and he also handed out a printed bibliography of the major sources of information on the Charter. Professor Hogg's book, Constitutional Law in Canada, 2nd ed., published by Carswell, contains a chapter on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and is required reading for students of the Charter.

Research in Canadian law is done differently from American research because of the differences in structure. Professor Halevy explained that the cases are reported much more slowly in Canada and therefore commercial services are more heavily relied upon than in America. The case reporting services in Canada digest the cases and many of those are later "reported" in the official Canadian reporters. Finding current binding authority is a bit more of a struggle in Canada than in America because of the methods of reporting.

Legislative history is also different because the government itself is the sponsor and
(Continued on Page 6)

Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms

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drafting body of legislation. The comments of Members in Parliament are not used in the same way as American Congressperson's comments because the Members don't have as much say in the legislative drafting process as in America.

Finally, Professor Halevy suggested that one need not purchase a special periodical index because Current Law Index and the Legal Resources Index provide adequate access to Canadian periodical literature.

For further information on this program, including copies of the Charter and bibliography, please contact Professor Halevy.

*Prepared by Theodore A. Potter
University of Toledo Law Library*

AALL AWARDS

Awards Committee

The AALL Awards Committee seeks nominations for the 1988 awards. Information about each award is listed below. To nominate, please send the requisite information to John Edwards, Chair, Awards Committee, Law Library, Drake University, 27th & Carpenter, Des Moines, Iowa 50311. The deadline for nominations for all three awards is March 1, 1988.

Joseph L. Andrews Bibliographical Award

Named in honor of the Reference Librarian for the Association of the Bar of the City of New York from 1930 to 1965, the Andrews Award has been presented since 1967 for "significant contribution to legal literature." "Significant contribution" is measured by the work's creative, evaluative elements and the extent to which judgment was a factor in the work's formation. To nominate a work, send its full citation to John Edwards.

Distinguished Service Award

The Distinguished Service Award is presented for outstanding recognition of extended and sustained distinguished service to law librarianship and to AALL. The award is presented to an individual nearing or following completion of an active professional career. Honorees may be recognized for achievement in a particular area of law librarianship, for service to the Association, or for outstanding contributions to the professional literature. The individual must be a member of AALL. To nominate an individual for this award send a letter to John Edwards summarizing the individual's career.

Law Library Publication Award

The Law Library Publication Award is presented to honor achievement in creating in-house user-oriented library materials outstanding in quality and significance. Qualified materials include bibliographies, aids, guides, pathfinders, maps, newsletters, videotapes, slides, and software. Publications which are produced primarily for sale outside the local clientele or which are offered systematically for sale in large numbers are not eligible for this award. Unsuccessful entries may be submitted for consideration each year, and new editions may be submitted for new consideration. To nominate a publication, send three copies to John Edwards.

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW OUTSIDE OF THE COURTS

Professor Frederick F. Schauer, Professor of Law at the University of Michigan Law School, spoke on constitutional decision-making which goes on outside of the courts. His premise was that the decisions made in the courts are only a small portion of the constitutional process and that the most significant constitutional decision-making goes on in the everyday lives of the American people.

One example comes right from the Constitution: one must be at least 35 years old to run for President of the United States. While it isn't the dominant thought of most Americans, anyone under 35 who is interested in that office cannot even consider it. Another example is that people may not be subject to involuntary servitude under the 13th Amendment (even though many librarians may feel like slaves!). This kind of constitutional decision-making goes on every day as a result of our form of government. Without this kind of decision-making, our society would fall apart. Many constitutional values are taken for granted but we truly are making decisions based on that document.

Virginia Wise, Reference Librarian at the University of Michigan Law Library, spoke on the need to collect the sources of constitutional decision-making going on outside of the courts. Things like public opinion on constitutional issues should be collected. However, how should it be done and made accessible? The obvious sources of information related to constitutional decision-making include the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents and House/Senate bills and related reports and hearings, etc. These materials are readily accessible in most law libraries. However, no good solutions exist as to collection of the more ephemeral sources of constitutional decision-making. The program raised interesting questions about how we view our Constitution.

*Prepared by Theodore A. Potter
University of Toledo Law Library*

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For extra copies of the ORALL Newsletter write:
Theodore A. Potter, University of Toledo Law
Library, 2801 West Bancroft St., Toledo, Ohio 43606.

LAW LIBRARIANS - WHAT IS YOUR QLQ (QUALITY OF LIFE QUOTIENT)?

A summary of remarks presented at the Northeast Regional Conference of Law Librarians held October 8-10, 1987 in Albany, New York.

An inspiring and impelling program was available to conference attendees interested in identifying, evaluating, and improving the quality of life in their jobs. As coordinator and moderator of the panel, the charismatic Donald Dunn, Law Librarian and Professor of Law at Western New England College, set the tone for the lively presentation by first enumerating thirteen factors by which "quality" can be measured. Quoting from an article by Cheryl Price, quality of job life is measured by stability, responsibility, an accurate job description, meaning in the position, leadership, flexibility, support by the administration, clear administrative lines, prestige, professional salary level, growth opportunities, a healthful and comfortable environment, and support services.

A high level in each of these areas is quite a "wish list," which was aptly illustrated by Don's daydreamed conversation with his law school dean, fantasizing high expectations for his library. In essence the message was that in order for the librarian to perform well the governing institution should provide for its professionals all of these elements, categorized as clear direction, job security reinforced by adequate salary, and a positive working environment along with responsibility and a modicum of prestige.

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For membership information contact: Marianne Maher, Theodore Levin Memorial Library U.S. District Court, 722 Federal Building, Detroit, Michigan 48226.

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Law Librarians - What Is Your QLQ?

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The next speaker, Marnie Warner, the Law Library Coordinator for the Massachusetts Trial Court Department, elaborated on the point that one's own perception of the working environment can alter the quality of life in different organizations. She added that one greatly enhanced "quality factor" can override a less than desirable factor, tipping the scales in favor of an overall good quality of life. Marnie emphasized that it is important to focus on the full picture. Is the library running smoothly? Are the patrons adequately served?

It is also important to be emotionally happy with a job in order to deal with day to day problems. The less than desirable factors of inadequate office space, the performance of non-professional tasks, and the occupational stress arising from bureaucratic red tape can be offset by a job that is secure, a salary that is good, a work schedule that is somewhat flexible, and a reasonably high level of autonomy. She reinforced that communication between co-workers remains foremost in establishing a good quality of life. It improves and gives importance to the job. Day to day experiences will be gratifying if they work well.

The ever popular Ken Svengalis, the State Law Librarian of Rhode Island and self-appointed LLCA (Law Librarians' Consumer Advocate), addressed the need for law librarians to recognize the greater good resulting from their efforts to improve legal services in the community and to reinforce this purpose with both the governing authority and patrons. The acknowledgement by others of this goal, along with professional performance, affords the law librarian a level of status within an organization regardless of graduate degree, either MLS or JD.

Of equal importance to job satisfaction are autonomy and self-motivation in developing a work day and time to pursue professional activities. Adequately funded attendance at professional meetings is a significant indicator of quality of job life. In most communities the professional law librarian has few peers or colleagues and the networking value of regional and national conferences is vital, as well as the continuing education and technical training offered. In most organizations prominent

participation in professional programs is highly valued.

Cornelia Trubey, the Law Librarian for the Boston firm of Ropes and Gray, described a librarian's quality of life as seen from a "window-office" in a big city law firm. In most firms personnel not engaged in the practice of law for the firm, including the librarian with or without a JD, will be considered support staff. If, however, the librarian is identified as key administrative personnel, one is likely to receive a higher salary, if the firm employs a professional manager.

As law firms are private, profit-making organizations the activities of the librarian may vary with the focus of the firm; however, increasing the speed and efficiency of library operations is the overall goal to be achieved. The users are not generally aware of the functions and processes performed by the librarian but they easily recognize positive results.

Librarians in large law libraries are often overwhelmed by the enormity of a project and the attendant administrative problems. The smaller scale of library activities in a law firm library affords the librarian the opportunity to initiate, develop, and complete substantial projects within a reasonable amount of time. This creates for the librarian a strong sense of accomplishment which in turn elevates the quality of job life.

As an example, Cornelia described the conversion of her library records to an in-house automated system. The accuracy of records and the accessibility of materials was enhanced and, in addition, the level of technological awareness of the librarian was displayed. Contact with other administrative managers in the firm was expanded.

The enthusiasm and energy with which these speakers described their situations clearly indicates that each enjoys a high quality of job life and accentuates Don's very suitable description of each as "untouched by time, dashing good-looking, and enjoying life in the fast lane."

DETERMINE YOUR OWN QLQ

The following is an informal, unconventional, and unrefined quiz highlighting many of the comments presented in the "Law Librarian's Quality of Life" program. Identifying deficiencies may be the first step in the elevation of your QLQ.

	Yes	No
Do you regularly schedule your day's activities?	_____	_____
Is your salary equal to or above the regional, professional standard?	_____	_____
Is your working or office environment desirable?	_____	_____
Do you have adequate opportunity to display leadership skills?	_____	_____
Is your formal job description accurate?	_____	_____
Do you feel secure in your position?	_____	_____
Are your support and staffing needs acknowledged and met?	_____	_____
Is your level of prominence in the organization equal to your level of responsibility?	_____	_____
Do you enjoy a satisfying level of communication with colleagues and co-workers?	_____	_____

The responses to these ten questions might offer a clue as to how you perceive your quality of job life. Total the "yes" responses and identify your category as follows:

8-10 - high satisfactory QLQ

4-7 - average QLQ - need improvement to continue employment

1-3 - poor QLQ - search the placement lists, it's time to make a change

Two of the panel participants offered the following as guideposts for knowing when it's time to change your present position:

"When you give it your best year after year and it keeps getting worse and worse." - D. Dunn

"Move on when you stop caring about your work, it is morally corrupting." - M. Warner

*Prepared by Joanne Beal
Dayton Law Library Association*

**TREASURER'S REPORT
OCTOBER 1, 1987**

Balance on Hand, January 1, 1987		\$2,188.64
<u>Income:</u>		
Dues:	\$3,870.00	
Meetings	3,848.00	
Miscellaneous	4.50	
Interest:	222.90	
Exhibitor's Booths	4,937.30	
ORALL/MICHALL (AALL) Breakfast	528.00	
		<u>\$13,410.70</u>
		<u>\$15,599.34</u>
<u>Expenses:</u>		
Newsletter:	\$1,475.04	
Meetings	5,190.32	
Breakfast (AALL)	519.37	
Misc. (Refunds, "footnotes," core bibliography, grants)	1,568.39	
		<u>\$8,753.12</u>
Balance on Hand, October 1, 1987		<u>\$6,846.22</u>
C.D.	\$2,131.43	

*Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Woodruff, Treasurer*

ORALL COUNTY LAW LIBRARIES SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

The fall meeting of the County Law Libraries SIG was called to order at 11:30 A.M. on October 8th, 1987, by Chair Mary Tekancic, who then called for subgroup reports.

Legislation: Rosemarie Chrisant (Akron) discussed the impact of the recent Ohio Attorney General's opinion regarding juvenile court fines. The opinion covers only traffic fines collected in juvenile courts. The fine monies are to be distributed on a percentage basis (under O.R.C. Sec. 3375.53) to county law libraries, with no cap on the total amount. Each county auditor should send a breakdown of sources of funds with checks sent to the county law library so that juvenile court distributions can be monitored.

Automation/Computers: Martha Cox (Stark) reported that she had received no responses to her letter requesting computer related news. She also described her library's experiences with a trial subscription to the Hanna System, an online Ohio and Michigan legislative tracking service. The system is very fast and has very helpful support staff, Martha said. It can provide legislative histories and copies of bills with access by bill number, O.R.C. section or broad subject terms. The Toledo Law Association Library is the only county law library currently subscribing. They use Hanna on an IBM 3101 and charge \$1.50 per minute for searches.

Rosemarie Chrisant gave a final report on her automation survey. She received only one additional response after the spring meeting. Anyone interested in a copy of her summary of responses should contact Rosemarie directly. The survey revealed that the IBM is the microcomputer most commonly used in county law libraries and that cataloging, acquisitions, serials and circulation are the activities being automated. Martha Cox added a few comments about the SIRSI software being installed at her library. It allows communication via modem within a 100-mile radius of the library. The Akron Law Library uses Datatrek for cataloging, serials and acquisitions. It also has modem capability.

Quarters and Space: Mary Tekancic (Lorain) noted that four libraries have used the SIG's notebook of moving and renovation information.

Funding and Law Suits: A letter was read from Jan Novak (Cleveland) regarding the OAG juvenile court opinion. No other lawsuits are pending. Betty Busch (Dayton) reported on a discussion of a proposed unified court management system that took place at the September meeting of the Law Libraries Committee of the Ohio State Bar Association. The proposal, as described in a report from former Chief Justice Frank Celebrezze's office, would create state-wide funding of county law libraries with coordination through the State Library. Extensive discussion of the far-reaching effects such a change would have on our libraries followed. Loss of local control and discontinuation of private sources of funding would be among the most devastating results. We all need to closely monitor any developments in regard to this proposal.

Membership: Sally Davis (Medina) reported that no new members have been added to the SIG since the spring meeting.

New Business: The first item of new business was the election of officers. Rose Brown (Defiance) will be the Chairperson-elect for 1988. Rosemarie Chrisant will be the SIG reporter to the ORALL newsletter. In subgroup changes, Rosemarie Chrisant will be replaced on the legislation subgroup by Brenda Woodruff.

The spring 1988 meeting of the SIG will be held at the Cleveland Law Library Association and will be hosted by library director Jan Novak. An ad hoc committee of Judith Gill (Wood), Corliss Davis (Akron) and any other SIG members who are interested will prepare a presentation on the unified court management proposal.

Martha Cox asked all SIG members to write letters to West Publishing protesting their recent increase in microfiche prices. The cost of one microfiche is now \$17.00 minus the book return discount and fiche from other publishers is substantially less expensive.

Rosemarie Chrisant reported on the formation of an informal group of northeast Ohio county law librarians. The group met for lunch and a tour of the Stark County Law Library in September and planned to meet at the Medina County Law Library in November.

Corliss Davis offered to share a notebook containing sample county law library handbooks and newsletters. Two SIG members requested it at the meeting and anyone else who is interested should contact Corliss directly. Members are also encouraged to send copies of their publications to the Akron Law Library Association for inclusion in the notebook.

Betty Busch described a proposal by Mead Data Central to promote LEXIS at her library. A discussion followed of local sponsorship of online systems and the extent to which county law libraries should promote commercial ventures.

Mary Tekancic concluded the meeting by offering her library as a clearinghouse for information on audit-related problems. Due to the extensive discussions on other topics at the meeting, there was no time for Mary to present the results of her questionnaire on audit problems. The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 P.M.

*Prepared by Corliss C. Davis
Akron Law Library Association*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rose Brown, Librarian at Defiance County, has been asked to serve as Secretary to the NW Ohio Bar Association's newly formed Grievance Committee. This Bar Association encompasses Counties of Defiance, Williams, Henry, Fulton, Putnam, Van Wert, and Paulding. It is the secretary's duty to act as liaison between the complainant and Grievance Committee. Ms. Brown reports that she was asked to serve in this capacity due to her active involvement with the Defiance County Law Library and its Bar.

ORALL GRANTS

The Education Committee was pleased to receive a number of grant applicants to the 1987 fall meeting of ORALL. After much deliberation, the Committee named Andrew Brann of the Columbus Law Library Association and Helen Skuggedal Reed of the Vanderburgh Co. Law Library (Evansville, Indiana) as recipients of the two grants. Congratulations!

Encouraged by membership response, the ORALL Executive Board voted to continue offering two enhanced grants of \$150 each for the regular spring and fall meetings of ORALL. Plans are underway for the ORALL spring meeting in Cleveland on May 25-27, 1988. The Education Committee again solicits applications from interested members.

The purpose of the Grants Program is to encourage and aid members in attending the programs and becoming active in ORALL. Although we especially encourage newer members or those who have never attended an ORALL meeting to apply, we also extend an invitation to active members.

Grants will be awarded on the basis of (a) potential for professional benefit from attending this meeting, (b) possibility of future contributions to ORALL, and (c) financial need. To apply, please photocopy and fill out the application form found in this issue of the newsletter and mail it along with a letter of recommendation by April 8 to Marcia Siebesma, chair of the Education Committee. Grant recipients will be notified as soon as possible after all applications have been reviewed.

AALL GRANTS/SCHOLARSHIPS

A grant application is included in this newsletter for AALL Grants and Scholarships. For further information please contact:

Donald J. Dunn, Chair
Scholarships and Grants Committee
American Association of Law Libraries
53 West Jackson Blvd., Suite 940
Chicago, Illinois 60604

EVALUATING REFERENCE SERVICES

"How good do we do what we say we do in our library?" That question was the focus of a program at the Albany Conference on "Evaluating Reference Services." Charles McClure of the Syracuse University School of Information Studies and the co-author of Unobtrusive Testing and Library Reference Services¹ spoke on the sometimes controversial social science research technique. Unobtrusive testing involves the use of a proxy with a posed reference question. This technique looks only at the quick fact and bibliographic information aspect of reference. A test in academic law libraries reported in Government Publications Review² found law librarians 67% on target. The correct answer fill rate is measured by dividing the number of correct answers by the total number of questions. Questions posed by phone were twice as likely to receive a correct answer. The zeal and enthusiasm of the individual librarian was also an important factor in testing. McClure noted that the half-life of an M.L.S. is 4 to 4 1/2 years - much of what is learned is outdated by then. Testing is a good way to pinpoint problems and to help the librarians update their reference skills.

Judging from the remarks of others who attended the program, the internal evaluation techniques used at the State Law Library of Michigan are just as controversial as unobtrusive testing. Barbara Vaccaro arrived at

the library on the heels of a consultant's report which found the library lacking in several areas. She had the existing reference staff train her in order to evaluate existing services. An elaborate system now exists for internally checking the accuracy of reference work before results are given to the patron. For all but basic quick answer questions, a detailed reference worksheet must be filled out. A reference librarian does not begin to work on a question until another librarian arrives to cover the Reference Desk. Giving wrong information and poor telephone procedures are corrected on the spot.

Yvonne Wulff of the University of Michigan Medical Library spoke about the different perspective of medical libraries. The level of reference intensity is great. She stressed the importance of written policies as a quality control measure - make sure everyone knows the policies and applies them in a standard fashion.

¹ P. Hernon & C. McClure, Unobtrusive Testing and Library Reference Services (1987).

² Way, "Quality Reference Service in Law School Depository Libraries: A Cause for Action," 14 Government Publications Review 207 (1987).

*Prepared by Carol Bredemeyer
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ORALL NEWSLETTER

Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries

RETURN TO:

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