June 1999

Volume 1999, Number 2

President's Column-Keith Blough

ORALL, INFLATION & BEYOND

ews flash 1949. France recognized the non-communist Vietnam nationalists under Bao Dai as an independent state within the French Union.

The North Atlantic Treaty was signed by foreign ministers of 11 nations. The Berlin Blockade was officially lifted. Philip Hench discovered compound E, better known as cortisone as treatment for rheumatism. 1984, by George Orwell was published. Love in a Cold Climate, by Nancy Mitford was published and no it is not about the founding of ORALL.

The Ohio Association of Law Libraries was formed at an organizational meeting on April 30, 1949. The meeting was held Saturday at 9:00 a.m. on the campus of the Ohio State University in Page Hall. Ervin Pollack, Professor of Law and Law Librarian of the Ohio State University College of Law called the meeting, but I understand that much of the credit should be given to Virginia Engle, past Librarian of the Akron Law Library Association. It seems that Miss Engle did most of the work behind the scenes to ensure that the organizational meeting would become a reality.

The association was formed with the objectives

of promoting "a spirit of mutual helpfulness among law librarians of the state, for promoting professional growth, and for furthering the development and usefulness of law libraries in the state." The founding resolution also stated that the chapter should become affiliated with the American Association of Law Libraries as soon as advisable, which turned out to be 1971.

During its first year, the association expended \$5.14, leaving a balance of \$62.86 in the treasury. I suppose it would be fair to state that our organization has made some progress in the last 50 years in terms of our bank account as well as membership numbers. We have grown to approximately 340 members from 38 and our current balance is in the neighborhood of \$60,000. Of course the true measure of ORALL or any organizations' success is whether it meets its objectives. This is generally a subjective measure, but considering the fact that ORALL is a strictly voluntary organization, I would say the mission statement has been fulfilled thus far.

As evidence I submit all the programs and projects, too numerous to mention, completed since the founding. Did you know that ORALL members worked to defeat legislation that would

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CONTENTS

Page	15
Page	12
Page	14
Page	4
Page	3
	Page Page Page

have been financially devastating to county law libraries? In the minutes of the May 12, 1967 business meeting, Arthur Fiske of the Cleveland Law Library Association credited Louise Prinz and Thomas Buker for their efforts and influence in defeating 2 adversarial pieces of legislation.

And the battle on the funding front is ongoing.

ORALL has also been instrumental in facilitating communication between publishers and government agencies to produce access to information in demand. The Ohio Attorney Generals Opinions and the Ohio Administrative Code are examples of publications that ORALL helped to create.

Another very important project was the dissemination of Ohio's Unreported Appellate Decisions, which I believe was initiated by Paul Richert. The results of these kinds of activities are seldom thought of and are thankfully taken for granted, but we should acknowledge these kinds of significant achievements in this our fiftieth year. How many people have been helped in your respective libraries over the years because they were able to retrieve unreported appellate decisions or sections of the Ohio Administrative Code?

At the spring meeting of 1965 held in Cincinnati, Mr. Kenneth Rush, A Springfield, Ohio attorney spoke on the history of law libraries. In describing the practice of law in the 19th century, Mr. Rush said, "Now for travel they had horses, a number of Indian trails and, what was really luxurious, the river boat (after 1811). Most of the travel by both bench and bar was still by horseback. Now a lot of you have been to such famous watering holes as River Downs, Randall and Bulah Park. Nowadays a horse will carry a lot of \$2.00 bets but not many \$12.50 ALR volumes."

Twenty years later in 1985, an ALR volume was \$31.35, an increase of 151% since 1965. Today in 1999 an ALR volume is \$82.50, an increase of 163% in 14 years. According to the Price Index for Legal Publications 1996, the price for all legal serial publications increased 495% from 1973/74 - 1995/96 while the consumer price index increased 253%. The table reproduced in The Legal Information Buyer's Guide 1999-99, by Kendall Svengalis reveals an astonishing 1006% increase for the category of legal continuations. It is no wonder that the history of the average law library's subscriptions over this time period is replete with

cancellations. Higher than average inflation has always been a concern with legal publications, but the accelerated trend of mergers and acquisitions of the past decade culminating in the Thomson acquisition of West Publishing in 1996 should really raise the red flag to consumers of legal information.

If you have not purchased the book by Svengalis, the chapter on the history of legal publishing alone is worth the price. As for the effect of mergers and acquisitions, we know that larger isn't necessarily better, particularly when it comes to value and service. Based upon what I have seen and heard thus far, the same kinds of problems have resulted from the recent mergers in legal publishing. I am certainly no futurist or guru, but I fail to see how the future can accommodate inflation in legal publishing of the magnitude we have seen the past 3 decades. And I take note of those who contend that the Internet will be an equalizer and a liberator of restricted information in the future. To some extent this has already happened, to what extent it will happen in the future remains a very important unknown.

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ORALL 50th Anniversary PR project- SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!

Through conversations with ORALL officers and members, we have determined that the most useful potential contacts for spreading the word about ORALL is to attorney organizations, law library organizations and general library organizations. We are working on preparing a press release that will highlight the value of ORALL since 1949 to these various groups. The material will probably be used in the Fall before the Oct. ORALL 50th anniversary meeting to highlight the special speakers and to try to get quotes from Bob Berring and/or one of the original members (Jody found him*he is now a judge).

A sample of potential contact organizations follows. If you can identify any others, please let me know. My goal is to recruit an ORAlien to get the specific contact information for these organizations/publications and create a master list that we can then mail our PR information to. (and it can be mailed at ORALL expense) These publications and organizations may not use our material, but we feel it would be worthwhile to send it for the exposure of law librarians.

American Assn. Law Libraries (WEB site, Spectrum, other) Special Libraries Assn. (national and local chapters) Ohio Library Council (newsletter, etc.) Kentucky Library Assn. Indiana Lib. Assn. Michigan Lib. Assn. (and MichALL) State Library of Ohio (newsletter) KY, IN, MI state lib. org. State and Local Bar Assn. publications. Library Journal American Libraries AALS- Syllabus Chronicle of Higher Education AALL Chapter WEB sites other

Possible sources for names and addresses*AALL directory, Directory of Ohio Libraries (and KY, IN, MI directories)

PR committee: Anita Shew, Claudia Zaher, Rich Humphrey, Jane Underwood, Kathy Carrick, ORALL officers AND YOU.

PLEASE CALL OR E-MAIL ME IF YOU CAN COMPILE ANY PART OF THE LISTS OF LIBRARY CONTACTS. THANKS SO MUCH. Anita K. Shew, Butler County Law Library, Hamilton, OH. 513-887-3456 or shew@butlercountyohio.org

Reflections on Funding by Jody Beal (Dayton Law Library Assn.)

After reading the lead article in the recent issue of the AALL State Court & County Law Libraries News, I realized that it might contain a word to the wise about the restructuring of county law library funding in Ohio. The article recounts the concern and efforts of Jean Holcomb, Director of the King County Law Library in Seattle, and Ann Borer, Director of the county law library in Omaha, Nebraska. Both libraries receive annual budgets from their respective county commissioners. In Omaha, the board of county commissioners decided to no longer fund the county law library. In Seattle, Jean received just slightly over 20 percent of her requested budget. Through lobbying efforts their budgets were saved for 1999, but both face real challenges to identify long-term funding solutions.

As we attempt to negotiate long-term funding for our own county law libraries, I think it behooves us to remain closely aligned with the courts and attorneys we serve. I do not believe that we can rely on an adequate annual budget from our county general funds. Without agreeing to a plan which keeps us funded by the people who appreciate us most, I believe that many law libraries could fall from the knives wielded by county commissioners. For the most part, we do serve a select group of people, but these are well educated people who understand that a quality law library enhances the administration of justice in a county. These are our allies.

Whatever decision is reached regarding our future funding, I believe that the last thing we want is to be tossed into a county's general fund to sink or swim with all the other county programs, every year. If our current fine distribution system is to be replaced, an equally secure method of funding must be obtained from either a court cost and mandatory fine formula or a predetermined distribution from a state law library board. I attended some of the Sentencing Commision- Fine Distribution Committee meetings last year. I heard their words and saw their faces as they told a representative from the Ohio Police Chiefs Association that a departure from the existing traffic fine distribution formula is going to happen.

If we do not work to negotiate something secure that aligns us with the justice system, I'm afraid that in desperation the state legislature will make us just another county general fund item. This arrangement works for the county public defenders because they possess a U.S. Supreme Court mandate that they exist. Unfortunately, law libraries do not.

If it is decided that an annual minimum amount determined by statute for county law libraries is not adequate, whether by court costs or apportionment, it will be vital that our organization prepares standards and justifications for our use, in order to request increases. Customer service in our own courthouses may become an enhanced mission. As I mentioned, if we have to justify our existence, I'd rather be doing it to judges and attorneys than to county administrators. I still recall the visit to our law library by a county commissioner who remarked, "When are you ever going to have enough law books?"

This is all just food for thought, but that article got me thinking that I'd rather play ball with the lawyers and judges than get kicked off the team by the owners.

Program Review: "Quality Customer Service: Beyond 'How May I Help You?" reviewed by Melissa Scheirey, Cincinnati Law Library Association

The library no longer has a monopoly on providing information to the general public or to subject specialists. Information is available at people's fingertips from a variety of sources, both traditional and electronic. Various institutions offer access to this information. Libraries are simply one component of the information industry. Librarians must provide value-added services. One very important way to gain and retain loyal patrons is through good customer service.

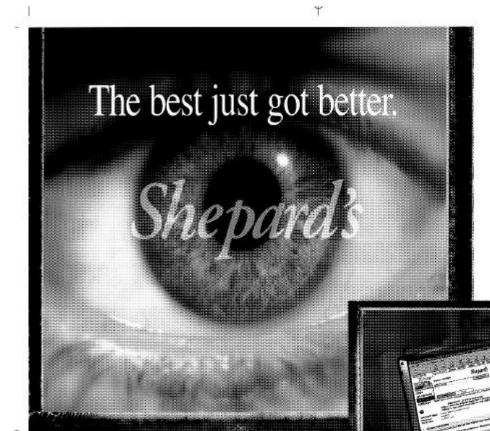
The American Association of Law Libraries and West Group hosted the video conference "Quality Customer Service: Beyond 'How May I Help You?" on April 15, 1999. I attended the conference at the University of Dayton (UD). The event at UD was sponsored by Lexis. Dr. Darlene Weingand and Ms. Pat Wagner were the featured speakers. They discussed identifying the customer and the customer's needs, how to prioritize those needs, how to plan for quality customer service, and the implementation of these ideas.

The customer may be defined as anyone who enters the library, and the library must recognize and respond to the user's needs. These needs should come before the convenience of the library and staff. The customer should be the priority. The library must ask for suggestions on how to better serve the customer, and the organization must be willing to respond and make changes. There are formal and informal methods of asking questions, which were discussed by the panelists. They include discussions, surveys, and interviews, which may be conducted in-person and by written correspondence, either in a letter or by e-mail. According to the panelists there are three types of research: tradition-based which focuses on what worked in the past; customer-based which identifies what customers want today; and vision-based which looks toward the future. The librarian must be aware that patrons may not say what they are truly thinking and must find a way to discover the honest opinion of the user.

The general formula for change suggested by the panelists is for the library to take stock of its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT), develop a plan of action, and evaluate the outcomes. The library must have a "mission and [a] vision." The library needs to identify methods for providing services faster, cheaper, and better. Services must be prioritized according to customer needs, and tough choices may need to be made. As positive changes are made it is important to market the library's services. A customer who receives quality customer service will become an advocate for the library.

The most important people in providing quality customer service are the front line staff. They need to be productive and positive people who want to achieve. According to the panelists, the library staff must understand and be committed to the goal of customer service excellence. The library should be proactive in making these positive changes. Responding only after a crisis does not inspire the confidence of staff or users. The library should become essential in the life of the people they are trying to serve.

This presentation effectively reinforced the importance of customer service. Libraries are one piece of the ever growing and changing world of information. The service we provide our customers is sometimes as important as the product itself. This video conference successfully defined customer service and detailed its benefits to the library, discussed the manner in which to review, change, and evaluate current policies and practices, and conveyed the importance of marketing these services.



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Celebrate the 50th Anniversary with an ORALL T-Shirt or Denim Shirt. The Committee has made the following arrangements:

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White T-Shirt with the blue ORALL 50th LOGO

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DENIM SHIRTS

These are cotton stonewashed denim shirts with long sleeves, button down collars with the LOGO stitched in red on the front chest pocket.

Order in men sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL

COST: \$31.00

Delivery: At the Fall ORALL conference or thru mail after 7/15

DELIVERY INFORMATION

T-Shirts:

ORDER AND WEAR AT AALL!!

Order your T-Shirt before June 15th and it can be delivered to you during the AALL convention. We intend to delivery the T-Shirts to the 4 main convention hotels, just list the hotel where you will be staying on the invoice. If you are not staying at one of these hotels, we will have the pre-ordered T-shirts at the ORALL table on Sunday, July 18th. We do not plan to sell the T-shirt at the convention hall.

Denims:

We will have a mock up of the Denim shirt at the convention, and we will be taking orders there. If we receive enough pre-order (minimum is 12) before D.C., we may be able to do a preliminary batch order, but we are trying to minimize expenses and a single batch may be mandatory. So, we cannot guarantee availability of the denim shirts until the ORALL Fall convention. But it will be there!!

If you want your shirt mailed to you please add \$3.50 for priority mail handling.

PROCEDURE:

Please use the enclosed invoice to order your shirts. Make sure you list the sizes and Hotel (or convention table) for FREE delivery. Denim shirts will be delivered to you at the Fall conference in Columbus. But, if you can't wait and would like your shirts mailed to you, please add \$3.50 for shipping costs. Make your check out to: ORALL and send it to Tom Hanley, U. of Dayton Law Library, 300 College Park, Dayton, Ohio 45469-2780.

If you have any questions, contact Kathy Carrick at 216-368-6357, kxc4@po.cwru.edu

Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries

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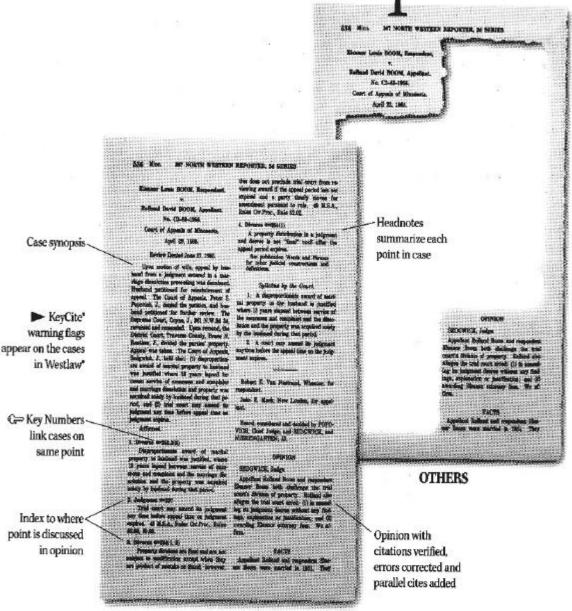
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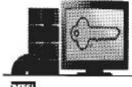
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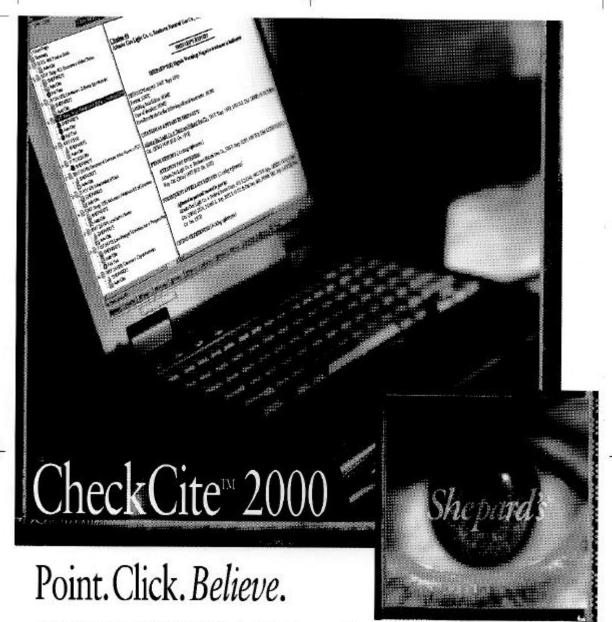


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Testimony of Keith Blough, ORALL President and Library Director, The Columbus Law Library Association Before the Ohio Courts Futures Commission April 7, 1999

I am here this evening to speak to the Ohio Courts Futures Commission with respect to the county law library system in Ohio and how it may be improved to meet the needs of the courts and the citizens of Ohio. The progress report mentions county law libraries on page 10 and states that "The county law library is the point of public access to information about the judicial system and the procuring agency for court legal information services."

I agree that the county law libraries should be open to the public. Currently some libraries charge membership dues and restrict access to their libraries to members only. Some counties are too small or are otherwise insufficiently funded to provide meaningful access to the public. It is suggested in the report that access to the court system should be improved and trained personnel should be available to provide assistance to members of the public. The Columbus Law Library provides limited assistance to members of the public on a daily basis. On a typical day, we will see anywhere from 5 to 15 individuals who are looking to file forms without the assistance of an attorney. Usually these matters are related to domestic court.

The extent of assistance to be provided to the general public is an issue to be addressed by the Unauthorized Practice of Law Commissioners. However, where providing access to basic forms and other court and local government information is concerned, the county law library would be the logical agency to charge with organizing and making the information accessible.

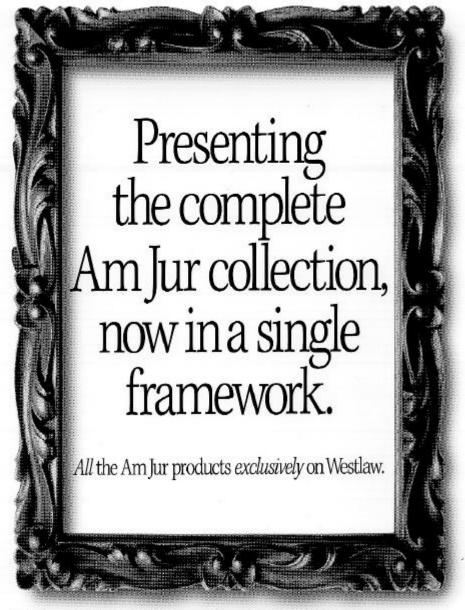
I also agree that the county law library should assume the role as the procuring agency for legal information services. I have recently served on a committee in Franklin County which has just completed the process of bidding out a contract to provide desktop access to one of the major online legal data base vendors to judges and attorneys in the courts and various agencies in Franklin County. Karen Casey, Administrator of the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas is to be commended for initiating the process and coordinating the various courts and agencies to recognize that a better deal could be procured through a concerted effort. But the fact remains that each agency within Franklin County will still be responsible for funding the number of users from their respective budgets. The county law library has traditionally provided access to a collection of legal materials to the bench and bar to facilitate the administration of justice. These collections have been transformed in the past 20 years to include access to electronic databases as well as the traditional hard copy. Because professional law librarians are the ones most knowledgeable about legal information sources and publishers, and because the changes in the legal publishing industry have been and continue to be dynamic, the county law library would be the logical agency to administer legal research service contracts.

If responsibility of this essential function was handled centrally, the various courts and agencies would have one less problem to deal with and could better concentrate on their primary responsibilities.

The current system of funding the county law libraries has produced disparities similar to what exists among Ohio's 88 county governments. One would expect to find a significant difference between size of government and resources available when comparing a populous county such as Cuyahoga or Franklin to Adams or Allen county. The two major factors of course, are the population of the county and the general economic climate. However in the county law library system, the primary factor in determining the relative well being of the local county law library is the number of highways and how many tickets are written under state traffic laws and collected. For example Stark County with a population of 377,000 received more money (\$702,215) in 1998 than did Cuyahoga County with a population of 1,395,000. (\$645,036)

The inequities in funding have been a topic of discussion for the last 15 years and the climate is such that county law librarians recognize that there will be a change in the not too distant future.

In the future, I would hope that county law libraries are reorganized in such a way that allows for the formation of regional law libraries. These regional law libraries will better serve their constituents by combining resources and utilizing staff and technology to improve both the scope of their services and the hours of availability. I expect that most access will occur electronically by the year 2025. Obstacles to be overcome include the issues of autonomy vs. regional and/or state control and the implementation of standards to ensure that minimum levels of service are provided. Funding will be another major issue as technology has created a demand for a higher skilled and paid workforce. Another unknown quantity is the future of the legal publishing industry. Over the past several years we have seen the trend of mergers and acquisitions of major legal publishers, and inflation has continued to be a significant factor making it difficult for law libraries to maintain their subscription base of core legal materials. As the transformation of legal publishing continues with respect to both the publishers themselves and the format of the publications, it will be more challenging for law libraries to maintain collections that are complete and historically in tact. By combining resources and redefining the mission and structure of Ohio's county law libraries vis-à-vis Ohio's court system, we will be empowered to meet the challenges of the future and provide better service to all concerned. In summary, I hope that the members of the Ohio Courts Futures Commission will seriously consider the benefits that can be achieved by including county law libraries in the plan to improve the justice system in the next millennium.



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CAROL'S CORNER

by Carol Parris, University of Kentucky Law Library

This is a regular column of light-heated, tongue-in cheek musings by Carol Parris, Reference/Research Services Librarian at the University of Kentucky College of Law Library. Carol herself has a solid Appalachian (Western Virginia childhood and Berea College) background, and she offers these musings with no offense intended-editor

You know your law librarian is a redneck when:

- 1) The reference desk has a gun rack.
- 2) The book carts are covered with NASCAR stickers.
- 3) The library date due stamp has "You all come back now, hear?"
- 4) There are 4 or more hound dogs asleep under the circulation desk.
- 5) The library secretary dances part time under the name of "Dusty Tomes".
- 6) There is a broken refrigerator and an old, dirty couch on the front steps of the library.
- 7) The Cataloger wrestles under the name "The Masked Labeler".
- 8)The Library Director is also known by "The Colonel".
- 9)The library van is up on blocks.
- 10)More than 3 of the library staff are cousins.
- 11) Only 2 of your staff are cousins but they are married.
- 12)The library retreat is over when the liquor runs out and the shooting commences.
- 13)The middle name of every librarian is Bob.

- 14) The preservation librarian's favorite tool is duct tape and baggies.
- 15)The library staff kicks in for a new big microwave for the lounge because the old one wouldn't cook a whole possum.
- 16) The keyboards in the computer lab are camouflaged.
- 17) The circulation desk computer password is Bubba.
- 18)A library computer crashes and 7 blue tick hounds are wiped out.
- 19) The working OPAC terminal sits on top of a non-working OPAC terminal.
- 20) There is deer jerky in the shelf list drawer.
- 21)The "gun law" section is larger than the "foreign law" section.





All aboard...

We've Got the Hot Ticket to AALL Action

To celebrate our five years of service to the librarian community, we're pulling out the stops at the AALL Annual Meeting in Washington D.C. July 17-21. Join us! You'll love the ride. Our team of law and accounting librarians will transport you through every nuance of the latest LEXIS-NEXIS information and technology enhancements. And discover how:

- ★ We've grown! The LEXIS-NEXIS Librarian Relations Group has added new members — and more librarian expertise to assist you. Check out our new, expanded Web site!
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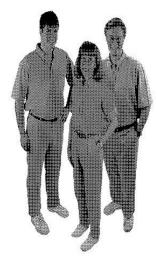
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See you in Washington D.C.



From right to left: Holley Thompson, senior director of LEXIS-NEXIS Strategic Customer Development; Andrea Muto, LEXIS-NEXIS Regional Information Manager for the Midwest; Judy Floyd-Evans, director, LEXIS-NEXIS Strategic Customer Development; Priscilla Stultz,

LEXIS-NEXIS Regional Information Manager for the Midwest; and **Cindy Spohr**, director, LEXIS-NEXIS Strategic Customer Development



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ORALL 50th ANNIVERSARY MEETING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Four \$300 Scholarships Are Available for the Meeting in Columbus Oct. 13-15, 1999

Please include one letter of recommendation from a person familiar with your work, potential and need of this scholarship.

1. Name:				
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3. Address:				
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8. Professional Activities and Committee Memberships:	-			
9. Member of ORALL since:	_			
10. What percentage of your expenses will your employer pay for you to attend this meeting	;?			
11. Have you previously attended AALL or ORALL meetings? If so, when?				
12. Please describe your responsibilities in your current position:				

13. Please attach a summary of your career goal and a statement of how you will benefit from attending this meeting:

Complete this form and return to:
Cindy Spohr
LEXIS-NEXIS
P.O. Box 933
Dayton, OH 45401

Applications must be received by August 15, 1999



Calendar 1999-2000

1999

July 17-22 American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting, Washington, DC

October 13-15 ORALL Annual Meeting/50th Anniversary Conference, Columbus, OH

2000

January 5-9 Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C

April 9-15 National Library Week

July 15-20 American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA

Newsletter Deadlines
February 15, May 15, August 15, and November

OHIO REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES

Profile

ORALL is a 4-state chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries [Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan]. It was formed in 1949 "to further the development and usefulness of law libraries and to stimulate a spirit of mutual helpfulness among law libraries of this region."

An annual conference is held in the Fall of each year. ORALL publishes or sponsors the following publications: *Core Legal Collection* [bibliographies for Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan], ORALL Membership Directory, ORALL Newsletter, ORALL Union List of Serials, Ohio Legal Resources Annotated Bibliography & Guide 3rd.

Placement

For Job Listings and further information, contact Deborah Ward, ORALL Placement Committee Chair, Hancock County Law Library Association, 300 South Main St., Findlay, OH 45840 419-424-7077 (phone), 419-425-4136, e-mail: debward@bright.net

Membership

Membership: 303 Dues: \$15.00 per year Non-membership subscriptions:

\$10.00 per year

Contact: Tom Hanley, U. of Dayton Zimmerman Law Library, Dayton, Ohio 45469-2780, or call 937/229-2444 or e-mail hanley@udayton.edu.

Newsletter Information

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