

State & County

Law Libraries

NEWS

Vol. 22, No. 1 Fall 1995

Newsletter of the State, Court and County Section of the American Association of Law Libraries

From the Chair

With the whirlwind of the National Conference on Legal Information Issues and the Annual Meeting now behind us, I am ready to get down to business. I would like to start by personally thanking Marvin Anderson, as Chair, Kathy Carlson, as Secretary/Treasurer, and Anita Shew, as Past-Chair, for their service to the section and for their help to me over the past year.

Over the next several months as we plan for the coming meeting in Indianapolis, I have several themes that I would like each of us to consider.

The first is to encourage everyone to participate in the section. Participation can take many forms, such as volunteering to serve on a committee or agreeing to run for office. I don't believe that one necessarily needs to attend the Annual Meeting in order to participate. Most of the work for the section is accomplished by telephone, letter and, now, e-mail. Participation can also be done by simply sharing information with others. For example, I regularly meet with the library manager for our Attorney General's Office and lately we have been reciprocating with in-house library training for our employees. This provides an

inexpensive training opportunity as well as a chance for staff to interact with other librarians.

Secondly, I encourage all of us to spread the word about our section. Although our name specifies state, court and county law libraries, I believe that it does not adequately describe all of the types of libraries represented by the membership. We also include libraries for attorneys general, for municipal corporations, and for administrative agencies. Some of us are open to the general public, some of us are not. But we do share common concerns about funding, about collection development, about service. I have asked each of the officers and each committee chair to consider how we can encourage membership and promote participation by all libraries who share our common concerns.

Thirdly, I would emphasize that we all should be concerned and promote our libraries as integral to the efficient administration of justice. Whether yours is a public library like mine, open to all and sundry, or whether yours is open only to a select clientele, I still believe that you can support and encourage the recognition of our libraries as basic to the administration of justice and access to the justice system by all.

We have an excellent opportunity to open up discussion and participation through our listserve "STATECOURTCOUNTY-L". If you are on the Internet, sign-up by sending a message to listserv@lawlib.wuacc.edu with the following instructions:

SUBSCRIBE STATECOURTCOUNTY-L your name

My e-mail address is dnorwood@wln.com. Either send me a message or feel free to call me if you have questions or concerns.

I am excited about the challenge of the coming year and invite all of you to participate. A list of committee chairs and officers is printed elsewhere in this newsletter.

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Give one of them a call and offer to help. I would encourage each of you to volunteer with the section, to lunch with a cohort and to invite new members to join.



--Deborah Norwood
Washington State Law Librarian

Public Relations Committee Needs Volunteers

As Chair of SCCLL's Public Relations Committee, I am seeking both volunteers to serve with me on the Committee, and ways of spreading news of our members' accomplishments to each other and the wider legal & library communities. I can be reached via e-mail at mtlawjm@class.org.

--Judy Meadows
State Law Library of Montana

Montana State Law Library Launches Horizon

News from the State Law Library of Montana: We are in the midst of installing our first complete and integrated library system, Horizon, from Ameritech Library Services. When you read this newsletter we will no doubt be in the midst of bar coding the collection, and will appreciate any and all words of advise and encouragement! Judy Meadows spent 4 days in Santa Fe at the end of September consulting for the New Mexico Supreme Court on the needs and future of their library. Unfortunately Thaddeus Bejnar, New Mexico State Law Librarian, was out of the state at that time, so Judy was forced to entertain herself during the evenings.

--Judy Meadows
State Law Library of Montana

Book Review

Finding the Right Lawyer. Jay G. Foonberg. American Bar Association. Section of Law Practice Management. 1995. \$29.95 Order: (312) 988-5522

Finding the Right Lawyer is a practical and well-organized resource for laypersons seeking legal representation. Foonberg points out that as the law has become increasingly complex in the postwar period and as the number of lawyers and the size of law firms has increased, it has become nearly impossible for the average person to select an attorney in an informed manner. This book will go a long way towards solving this problem.

The types and levels of service and representation which an attorney can provide are detailed as well as alternatives to using a lawyer. The work then turns to a discussion of locating lawyers through directories, referrals and recommendations. Next comes a discussion of legal fees and representation agreements and a discussion of the practice of law.

There are sections on evaluating lawyers' qualifications and how to actually go out and hire a lawyer—including detailed advice on what to do at the first meeting with a lawyer.

This book reminds us of the perspective of the client entering an unfamiliar universe in which he or she feels powerless and overwhelmed. Lawyers who hire other lawyers or make referrals will also find this book useful. Lawyers who must locate counsel abroad will find a chapter which addresses this process in detail.

Nonprofit bar-related lawyer referral services around the country are listed in an appendix along with a detailed glossary of legal specialties useful to the layperson in narrowing the type of attorney they need.

Every law library which is open to the public should buy at least one copy of this book and display it prominently. This is a fine resource which has been needed for many years and is a real service to consumers of legal services and the law librarians who assist them.



—Donna Bausch
Norfolk Law Library

Third Northeast Regional Conference

Toronto, Canada - October 17-20, 1996

Come to Toronto in '96

You want a breathtaking skyline? You want a cosmopolitan atmosphere? You want Canadian hospitality? And, you want to meet with an international group of law librarians? Well, we've got just the ticket! The third Northeast Regional Meeting will take place October 17-20, 1996 in Toronto's Marriott Hotel. 1996 may seem like a long way away but planning has been in full swing for the last twelve months. Now the hard work of developing programs over the next several months begins.

What kind of programs are of interest to you? What format brings out the best in speakers and audiences? We want your thoughts and ideas. Toronto is an exciting city, we want to make the program match that excitement. Joni Cassidy of Cassidy Cataloguing Services, Inc. and Susan Van Beek of Hawkins Delafield & Woods are the Program Co-Chairs for the NE 96 Regional Meeting. They are anxious to see your program proposals so that they can provide a wide selection of sessions for this diverse group of librarians.

Toronto - Law Librarians - A Great Match for 1996

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