

LISP NEWSLETTER

Volume 1999, No. 2

LISP EVENTS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING If you are going to be in Washington, D.C. in July for the AALL Annual Meeting, please plan on attending the LISP-SIS Business Meeting on Sunday, July 18, 1999, from 5-6 p.m. Look for the location in your registration materials or around the Convention Center. This is a good opportunity to thank the outgoing LISP leadership and welcome the new, as well as see old friends and make some new ones. You can also give me ideas of things you would like to see in the newsletter. Hope to see you there!

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

Many thanks go to the LISP-SIS officers who have taken us through the year: Chair, Patricia G. Court, Cornell Law Library pat@law.mail.cornell.edu; Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect Angus B. Nesbit, University of Oregon Law Library anesbit@law.uoregon.edu; Secretary/Treasurer Joan Allen-Hart, San Diego County Public Law Library North County Branch jallhart@sdcll.org; and Past Chair Betsy McKenzie, Suffolk University Law Library emckenzi@acad.suffolk.edu.

And then there is me, your Newsletter Editor, John Adkins, USD Legal Research Center adkins@acusd.edu. But the pleasure of sending you this newsletter is thanks enough for me!

CLEARINGHOUSE UPDATE

The response to the letters requesting copies of pathfinders, library guides and other instructional materials designed to assist non law trained patrons in using legal collections, which were mailed out to academic, state, court, and county law libraries this winter, has been good. A sincere thank you to every library who has contributed materials. However, any library which might have materials fitting into one of the categories above who hasn't yet sent a copy of such materials, is encouraged to do so at its earliest convenience. The goal is to have a revised edition of the Clearinghouse Bibliography ready for distribution at the LISP business meeting in Washington, D.C. on Sunday, July 18, from 5-6 p.m. (room TBA). Making such a public statement will hopefully be the incentive necessary to see that the goal is met. The Clearinghouse Collection is an evolving collection, so as your law library develops new materials, please send them so that they too may be added. It is never too late to make a contribution to the Clearinghouse! Submitted by Elizabeth K. Schneider xpeks@ttacs1.ttu.edu

BOOK REVIEW

Submitted by Elizabeth K. Schneider xpeks@ttacs1.ttu.edu

Public Records Online, the National Guide to Private & Government Online Sources of Information, 2d edition, edited by Michael L. Sankey and James R. Flowers, Jr., is published by Facts on Demand Press

as one of the titles in the Public Records Research Library. The publisher describes the work "as the key which opens the door to online public records information." Fulfilling its stated purpose to make finding information easy by revealing where records are kept, outlining access requirements, and providing searching hints, it does in fact seem to be that key.

Following an introductory discussion of what constitutes the general category of public records, the work discusses searching state and federal court records and records maintained by county, state, and federal agencies. Information is provided about the types of records available from each source, possible restrictions on access to particular records, and information unique to each source, as well as charts and URL's. The next section is an alphabetical listing of the fifty states. Each state listing contains the address and phone number for key state officials, facts about the state, including the official state Internet site, and detailed information on state level agencies that offer on-line access to their records. Also included are profiles of the United States Bankruptcy and District Courts and an analysis of the structure and organization of all the county courts and county records offices. Included is the typical cost of searching county records. County level courts and recorders offices that do not offer online access are also profiled.

Almost one-half of the text is comprised of the "Private Company Index." Within it, companies are arranged according to which of the twenty-seven categories of information they provide such as addresses and telephone numbers, voter information, client information, etc. Each entry includes a profile of the company, which contains its name, address, and phone number, the year it was founded, representative clientele, and a statement of its capabilities. Also provided are its geographic coverage and whether the company maintains its own proprietary database or acts as an interactive gateway to another database.

The paperback volume is well-organized, making it easy to use and easy to read. The nature of the material is such that new editions will need to be issued regularly. However, with a list price of \$19.95, that frequent revisions should not pose an undue burden on library budgets. *Public Records Online* is a useful reference tool for any library which serves patrons looking for public documents. The only problem may be is that once a patron locates the source by consulting the book, he/she may expect the library to provide the computer so he/she can access the information. Not all libraries may be in a position to provide such a service.

FROM THE EDITOR: CHECK OUT SOME VALUABLE WEB SITES!

FEDERAL INTERNET GUIDE

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/govt/fedguide/fedguide.htm>

The Washington Post has created the Federal Internet Guide to help citizens sort through the vast amount of information released by and about the federal government. The site lets you search for government jobs or check out resources available for people in active service and veterans. You can also hook into sites devoted to the legislative, judicial, and executive branches, as well as independent agencies and the General Accounting Office. The Post's guide also includes news articles relating to its hometown beat in the nation's capital.

(With thanks to Ericka Horst at the U.S. Courts Library, San Diego, California.)

THE FEDERAL WEB LOCATOR

The Center for Information Law and Policy

<http://www.law.vill.edu/fed-agency/fedwebloc.html>

"Federal Government information at your fingertips" (tm)

The Federal Web Locator is a service provided by the Center for Information Law and Policy and is intended to be the one stop shopping point for federal government information on the World Wide Web. This list is maintained to bring the cyber citizen to the federal government's doorstep. If you learn of a federal government site not listed, please mail us so we can add it to the list and spread the wealth of information about the federal government on the Web. Also, please check out our page dedicated to Friends of CILP, who have helped provide missing federal government servers and with the content of this list.

Latest Additions to the Federal Web Locator include:

President's Council on Year 2000 Conversion

Internal Revenue Service

Government Information Xchange (GIX) - Resource for Federal Agencies

National Bioethics Advisory Commission

Federal Bureau of Investigation

United States Information Service (International information point to the United States)

Immigration and Naturalization Service

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

United States Copyright Office

Office of Personnel Management Retirement Programs

Operational Support Airlift Command (OSACOM)

Better Business Bureau

[DOI, FWS] Management Assistance Team

Office of Special Counsel

National Mediation Board

Updated [USDA] Rural Utilities Service

Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS)

Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service

Federal Chief Information Officers Council

American Battle Monument Commission (ABMC)

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The Center for Information Law and Policy

The Federal Web Locator

THE LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/glin/lawhome.html>

The Library of Congress began its existence in 1801 essentially as a collection of law books. But in 1832, Congress ordered the 2,011 law books of the Library of Congress separated from its general collection, and the Law Library of Congress was thereby established. Its mission is to provide research and legal information to the U.S. Congress as well as to U.S. Federal Courts and Executive Agencies, and to offer reference services to the public. To accomplish this mission, it has created the world's largest collection of law books and other legal resources from all countries, and now moves into the age of digitized information with these online databases and guides to legal information worldwide.

Global Legal Information Network (GLIN)

http://sp1.loc.gov:8092/glnp_agent/plsql/glnsignon2

The Law Library of Congress provides an online database with information on the national laws of more than 35 countries, with additional countries being added on a continuing basis. Presently it consists primarily of searchable legal abstracts in English of laws and regulations enacted since 1976, but the full texts of items of legislation in the original languages are now being added for some nations.

Guide to Law Online (Other Legal Resources)

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/glin/worldlaw.htm>

This annotated hypertext guide to legal sources worldwide (including U.S.) was created by the U.S. Law Library of Congress provides links to sources of information on law and government that are available online without charge.

Law Library Reading Room Services

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/glin/ll-about.html>

This file provides a brief history about the Law Library of Congress as well as information on the Law Library Reading Rooms, including the requirement for a Library of Congress Readers Registration card, the hours of operation, and the reference services available to the public.

THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

<http://www.abanet.org/>

The American Bar Association is the national organization of the legal profession. With approximately 370,000 members, it is the world's largest voluntary professional association. The Association has long served a dual role as advocate for the profession and for the public. For the general public, the ABA has links to information on their site that they think will be of interest. For example, they have links for the following subjects: Commission on Multidisciplinary Practice, Legal Assistance, Lawyer Referral, Volunteer Lawyer Programs, Lawyer Disciplinary Agencies, Publications For the General Public, All ABA Publications.

Additional Resources for the general public include: Public Services, Public Education, Legal Services, Domestic Violence, Mental & Physical Disability Law, Children and the Law, Homelessness & Poverty, Substance Abuse, Discussion Groups, Media Information, Media Center, Press Releases, Publications, Gavel Awards, Legal Service Plans, Prepaid Legal Services, Non-Traditional Plans, Students, Educational Materials About the Law, ABA Approved Law Schools, Law Student Division

Special materials about the law for educators, librarians, and the general public are located at <http://www.abanet.org/abapubs/consumer.html> . The following topics are covered at that link: Adult Education, College and University Materials, Finding the Right Lawyer, General Information, Tools for Journalists, Youth Education.

To find a lawyer, the ABA Network Lawyer Locator <http://www.abanet.org/martindale.html> contains listings from the Martindale-Hubbell database of over 900,000 listings of lawyers and law firms. In addition to the standard search criteria offered through Martindale-Hubbell Lawyer Locator, ABA Network Lawyer Locator also provides you with the ability to select ABA membership as a search criteria. You will also notice an ABA logo next to ABA members' listings.

In addition, there are over 70 groups participating on the web site. Check out the ABA web site! It's great!

AS ALWAYS.....

This is the second issue of the web-format LISP Newsletter. We hope you like it and find it useful and accessible. Please send your submissions, comments and suggestions directly to me, John Adkins, LISP Newsletter Editor, USD Legal Research Center, 5998 Alcala Park, San Diego, CA 92110 adkins@acusd.edu. Thanks!

[return to the main menu](#)