A LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING

ONE LIBRARIAN'S INTERNET ODYSSEY

Jonathan Shimmons
Federal Trade Commission

"I TENDED TO VIEW IT MORE AS AN IMPOSITION THAN A SOLUTION."

THAT THE INTERNET HAS FOREVER CHANGED THE NATURE OF OUR PROFESSION is an indisputable fact. But how, exactly, has this still fairly new technology made our jobs simpler or more challenging than before?

Thinking back to the early 90's, when the internet itself was still more rumor than fact, most of us had no more than a vague idea what it even was, let alone anticipate how it might one day change our lives. I remember feeling completely clueless attending conferences and reading articles from journals like *Online* in which those at the technological vanguard of our profession began casually communicating in *internetspeak,* a bizarre new code language I decided I'd better pick up quickly or soon be out of a job.

A host of new words entered our professional vocabulary. Seemingly overnight we were being asked to internalize this strange new language so that we could begin speaking intelligently among our peers about all things internet. At the time, I thought I was the only librarian in DC who didn't quite get it all. For the longest time I didn't know Telnet from FTP, to say nothing of a BBS; to me the whole thing was shrouded in mystery.

The problem wasn't that I was afraid of the internet. I'd always considered myself to be reasonably open to new technologies. I had eagerly learned and fearlessly used commercial online databases for several years at that point, and I was perfectly comfortable with my firm's integrated library system.

The main reason for my early resistance to the internet probably had more to do with a slight resentment I harbored for the way it seemed to have been thrust upon me. I tended to view it more as a imposition than a solution. We librarians were supposed to be grateful that the technology gods had smiled on us, inventing this wonderful new tool that was going to revolutionize our profession. The problem was the techies forgot to include an owner's manual - we were being asked to figure it out for ourselves.

Without my consent – or the consent of any of the other librarians I knew — the internet had suddenly become a professional imperative. No one had asked our opinion on the matter. We were just told we had to come along or perish.

But soon (after I learned not to take it all so personally) I dedicated myself to the task and began picking it up. It helped that my boss finally, after much lobbying, convinced the firm where I was working at the time to let the library open its own internet account. Nothing like a little hands-on to give one a better sense of what all the hype's about.

Pre-graphical Browsers

My on-ramp to the internet, for the first year or two anyway, was through CAPCON Connect. As far as I knew, CAPCON Connect *was* the internet. This was in the pre-Netscape era, when you really did have to be an expert to find anything in cyberspace. There was no such thing as "surfing the web" as we know it today. Although occasionally you did hear people using that language, we all knew better. A typical online session in those days was more like wading the surf and trying to avoid the undertow. It seemed the only useful (i.e., useful in the sense of helping you get actual work done) information available on the net at that time was obscure government data. At least that's the way I remember it.

The first thing I ever recall being asked to retrieve that was available exclusively through the internet was historical weather data from a county weather station in North Carolina. The attor-

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Brian L. Baker
University of the
District of Columbia
Law School

WELL FOLKS, EVERY COUPLE OF YEARS OR SO the issue of who is and who isn't a librarian crops up. Those who know me know that I feel strongly that to be a librarian you need to have earned an MLS or other equivalent Information Science degree. The question I have is whether I am in a minority.

I also want to know whether it all matters.

During the recent debate on the law-lib listserv on this issue, my wife and I had some friends over for dinner. I mentioned the debate, and got a complete round of eye rolling, and comments that anyone who works in a library is a librarian. One friend, a professional programmer, said that in her field many people take different routes to become a programmer, and most do not have the Computer Science/Programming degrees that she does, but everyone is still a programmer. This fact seemed not to bother anyone.

It bothers me.

Librarianship is a proud profession. Most of us went into it because we liked to help people. That desire to help tends to make us shy away from conflict. This is an important discussion that we have shied away from having too many times for too long. As a new century spreads out before us, it seems like now is a good time to start addressing these issues, or let them finally die.

It seems to me that there is a strong need for educating employers and the public on what it is a librarian does, and how crucial it is to their world. When friends of mine don't know or don't care about who is and who isn't a librarian, I get worried and annoyed. To them anyone from a shelver to the director is a librarian if s/he can either direct them to what they're looking for or find them someone who can.

Maybe that's fair. If so, then we need to better define our roles to the public and perhaps develop a new professional title to better describe our services. It seems to me that the best first step would be to develop a certification system. The question is, how does one develop such a certification process.

Most of the discussion mentioned that AALL should work to develop a certification program. To me, that does not seem to be the correct approach. If we want to be considered "professional" in the same way that lawyers and doctors are, we need to work on a state-by-state model. The American Bar Association and the American Medical Association do not certify their members; groups within each state do.

To me that seems to put the onus on the state

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Printed on recycled paper ♻

ney I was working with needed to verify the prevailing weather conditions for a local area there at a particular time and date several years earlier. The data was available from a BBS run by a government office whose identity I no longer remember. One thing I haven't forgotten is how painstakingly difficult it was to actually get the data and put it into a format that was acceptable to the attorney.

First, actually locating the file – using the now prehistoric-looking text-based LYNX browser – within the labyrinthine host directory structure was nearly impossible. Then, the file I had to FTP was so huge that I lost my connection more than once before successfully transferring it – in those days, not directly to my hard drive, but – to my personal directory on CAPCON. Once I had the file in my personal directory on CAP-CON, it had to be unzipped and then downloaded to my hard drive.

In attempting something as simple as what I've just described, encountering any number of miscellaneous glitches along the way was more than possible; it was expected. If you were lucky you could pull it off in an afternoon. Those whose first exposure to the internet was post-Netscape don't know how good they have it.

Early e-mail
Another use I found for the internet during those early years was to email anyone outside the firm. For at least a year there before SMTP became standard equipment with office email software packages, this was the only way you could email anyone outside your firewall.

If your internet connection was through CAP-CON, though, you were faced with the daunting task of learning to use a Unix-based email editor before you could send off a single message. I learned (in as much as one can learn) to use two – PINE and VI. And all I can say is, God help you if you ever have to do the same. PINE and VI seem to have been designed for the singular purpose of frustrating users into eventually becoming non-users. I won't go into the details but suffice it to say the only people who seem to like Unix editors are Unix network administrators.

The only other observation I have to add about the pre-graphical browser days is that the net itself at that time, despite being a pain to navigate through, was populated by far less junk masquerading as content, which of course today is a constant source of frustration.

Then, almost as quickly as when the internet first burst on the scene, it mutated into a graphics-happy tool that started behaving more and more like a toy. I can remember attending a much-hyped MOSAIC (anyone remember that?) demonstration back in, I think, '94. That was my first peek at something resembling the web of today.

The first web browsers were crude, sure, but not all that different from what we're now accustomed to. Despite the graphics explosion, which certainly did make the net more enticing, it still was hard to see how the internet could ever become a vital information dissemination medium.

Online Services on the Net
Most of my substantive online searching up to that time had been done in the legal databases, Lexis and Westlaw. There seemed to be nothing wrong with either of their software packages, no particular reason for me to want to switch to a new interface. Connections using the research software were generally reliable and after using both packages for several years I was expert enough to do my searches blindfolded, if necessary.

It was surprising to me how long it took Lexis and Westlaw to bring to market viable, user-friendly web interfaces. I am admittedly ignorant about them, but the last time I checked I did notice significant improvements in at least lexis.com, which today is the clear winner over the Lexis research software at least when it comes to Shepardizing.

Although I sense I may be shirking my professional duty, I still resist becoming more familiar with web-based Lexis and Westlaw. Partly that's due to my high comfort level with the software, but there are other reasons that may keep me from ever moving over, unless I'm eventually forced to.

One reason is that I've had some very bad experiences trying to print documents from the web. Any number of glitches can occur, I've found. Either the document you want to print appears in the wrong frame of the browser window so that you end up printing only the page banner, or you find yourself limited to printing just one document at a time – the one currently displayed in the browser window – when you actually want to print a number of selected documents from your search.

A similar problem often occurs when attempting to download to disk file. Often when downloading you still end up with documents including HTML tags or miscellaneous other garbage. This seems to happen on some systems despite your having asked to have the document downloaded in ASCII text format.

Lexis and/or Westlaw may have corrected these problems, but I know for a fact that some

> "IT WAS STILL HARD TO SEE HOW THE INTERNET COULD EVER BECOME A VITAL INFORMATION DISSEMINATION MEDIUM."

web-based systems still haven't gotten it right. Try printing or downloading multiple documents from CQ.com, for instance. You'll find that you have to deal with each document separately, a maddening ordeal if you're trying to work with, say, several lengthy House Reports.

Connecting to an online service via communications software, like Crosstalk or ProComm Plus, gets you around this problem of having to deal with documents separately. No web-based search system I know of can duplicate the ultra-simple and efficient Screen Capture, provided as a standard feature of any communications software package.

In my opinion, this is one of the great disadvantages to using a web-based search system over the old fashioned dial-up or telnet approach. An expert searcher using Crosstalk to connect to Dialog can run a quick search, collect 50 news articles, issue a type command and let the data scroll across his screen to a text file in literally seconds. There's simply no way to even approach that kind of speed and simplicity using the web today.

Another reason I haven't switched over to Lexis or Westlaw on the web is because of the different pricing structure which is in effect since internet time cannot be tracked the way time spent using the software can. Using the web interface, the experienced searcher is not rewarded for his skill in finding documents quickly and economically. (This, of course, is not an issue to anyone now under a flat-rate contract.) The very design of the Lexis and Westlaw software packages was to encourage smart searching. Now, under web interfaces, all searchers are treated equally and there is no longer any monetary incentive to become a more expert searcher.

You could take the opposite view, arguing that the web interfaces are fairer in that they don't punish the inexperienced. But doesn't that work against one of the goals of our profession – to strive for superior information retrieval?

And I think this gets at the heart of some of the major problems with web-based searching. There is the belief that in trying to reach the broadest possible audience, internet search engines (I'm referring here mainly to non-commercial general search tools like Yahoo!) have had to "dumb down" to the abilities of the least skilled — or perhaps more accurately, those least interested in precision.

Library Patronage and the Internet
A woman I work with who's done legal reference for over 20 years blames the internet for the dwindling number of visitors we see in the library these days. This is not to say we're any less busy than before. Email has simply made it easier for our patrons to avoid showing us their faces, which in itself is an unfortunate development.

But our concern is more that our patrons, who are now taking greater responsibility for their own research, may be proceeding in a somewhat less than thorough manner. Inexperienced searchers are most likely using the simplest search method available.

Most general internet search engines do offer an advanced search mode. But how many people use them? I'll admit that I rarely do because I simply don't like having to learn the quirks of umpteen different systems. Standardization is greatly needed but unlikely to come anytime soon, if ever. Also, it's hard to keep up with the changes, as some search engines are redesigned frequently.

Poor internet searching skills are almost epidemic these days. The unwieldiness of the internet makes this so. Even the best search engines are flawed because of the kind of data they search. It's a mess out there, a hodgepodge of substantive information surrounded by advertising, more advertising and just plain junk.

A lot of people think they're expert internet searchers. Search engines make you believe you are. Say you're looking for information on a company. You type the company name in a search window and send it off. Back comes a list of "500,000 items found." After you look through a few, if you're lucky, you may even find something that seems somewhat on point. Perhaps even a directory listing, which is exactly what you're after.

But how useful is this information? Can it be trusted? What is the source? When was it last updated? Chances are if you didn't pay for it it's not worth much.

Some of the people running these searches are our patrons. You know, the people who used to come to us for help. We can't be sure the questions above have even occurred to them. Knowing this makes us feel helpless. We know this kind of thing goes on every day but we don't know what to do about it.

The Wild, Wild Web
Because the internet is so huge and amorphous it will probably never be tamed. We librarians have a hard time accepting this since we have a great appreciation for sensible organization. One thing we just have to accept about this situation is that we don't really have much, if any, control over it or even much input in its development. Both Lexis and Westlaw took shape under our scrutiny. We were the test market for their products. If we saw something that didn't make sense we called

them on it, and often enough they responded.

The internet doesn't afford us this same luxury. It'll continue to grow in whatever shape it wants regardless what we think. But there still is something we can do to bring our expertise to bear on this situation. A lot of librarians don't like to even think about this, but the answer is outreach. That's right, good old PR.

There are many different ways to do it. Librarians, as a group, are especially averse to promotion. We tend to think of promotion as unseemly, or at the very least indiscreet. But it doesn't have to be.

Here at my agency we came up with an effective way of asserting ourselves into the consciousness of our patrons. We asked to be made a integral part of the new employee orientation program. Each Monday when new employees come aboard we have a chance to spend up to an hour with them, showing off our intranet site and online catalog, giving them a physical tour of the library.

We also use this opportunity to toss in a few words of caution about internet searching. By emphasizing the many different commercial databases we have access to, we educate our patrons as to information reliability. We explain how searches we can perform for them, as well as those they can run themselves, can often be more focused, less time consuming, and ultimately more reliable than blind internet searching.

One positive way in which easy access to the internet has changed the librarian's job is that it has provided us with a common front end to a multitude of different utilities. No longer are we required to familiarize ourselves with a variety of unique proprietary software packages. Basic features such as printing and downloading are built into the browser software. There is still a learning curve any time you have to learn a new system, but the basic look and feel remain fairly constant. Pull-down menus and radio buttons look the same wherever you go. They are part of an evolving web language with which we're all now increasingly familiar.

Accessing Government Information

At the risk of seeming biased, I will say that another very positive impact the internet has had on my job has been increased and often simplified access to government information. Most federal agencies now offer high-quality information gathering tools through their various web sites. This is a blanket statement, of course, but in general I believe it's true.

Take, for example, my agency's site, www.ftc.gov. When I started work here over three years ago it contained a lot of useful information

that, compared with the same site today, was more difficult to find. Our site today is attractively designed and well organized. There is often more than one route you can take to finding a document. If you can't find what you're looking for under one of the labeled categories on the main page, you can always resort to a search of the entire site.

The SEC is another government web site containing highly sought-after information. The SEC's EDGAR database was a big hit from its inception back in the mid 90s.

For the most part, the internet remains a vast wasteland of unorganized, if not unorganizable, random information. Still, great strides have been made in recent years to help establish some sense of order. It is crucial that we librarians involve ourselves as much in that effort, whether that is to be through the design of our own internal web sites or by educating our patrons in the most effective use of internet-based resources.

We may no longer be the gatekeepers of information in the same sense we were in the past. The internet has definitely forced us to give up some measure of control over the flow of information. But there is still a vital role for us to play in the continuing online revolution, and it is up to us to guarantee our voice is heard. ■

Alert Publications

West full page ad

THE DECADE OF THE 1990S HAS BEEN AN EXITING AND CHALLENGING TIME for the Technical Services staff in our law firm library, just as it has been in other libraries. Now, as we move into the 21st century, we ask: where have we been, where are we headed, and how do we manage our business in the future?

1. THE BUSINESS OF ACQUISITIONS AND SERIALS CONTROL

In recent years, all libraries have seen major budgetary changes. We have tried our best to balance our resources for online access and printed materials; with creativity and good business sense we have evaluated, selected, and negotiated the best prices and features of emerging electronic products. As most libraries have done, ours has forged new relationships with vendors such as BNA, CCH, Matthew Bender, Dialog, Lexis-Nexis, and many others. As site licenses and web-based services increase, we have become participants in new activities with the resulting need to learn more about resource acquisitions.

As we move forward into a new century, technical services are becoming more visible to library patrons. We continue our role as managers of people, resources, databases and materials. The stability and growth of acquisitions requires that we hire people with computer skills, those who can navigate the web, do on-line ordering, and have knowledge of the terminology of hardware and software. The makeup of a technical services staff is constantly changing in terms of skills, knowledge and procedures.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE ACQUISITIONS STAFF?

At Howrey & Simon, we centralize the purchasing of materials for the collection. Acquisitions staff plays an even more important role in the organization as multimedia materials increase. Acquisitions personnel need to be aware of the cost comparisons of all types of media, i.e., print, e-publications, web sites, etc., and how to make wise purchasing decisions based on evolving needs.

Although procedures and policies have changed to a certain extent now that publishers and vendors have changed formats, the basic management skills of the acquisitions librarian remain the same. Their automation skills should, and will, keep pace with these management skills.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF SERIALS STAFF?

At Howrey & Simon routing is very heavy in both traditional printed materials and in the distribution of electronic publications. The serials staff must put to use their greater computer skills and knowledge to maintain both print and electronic materials. As we have done in the past, we check-in and maintain our routing list via our Integrated Library System. E-publications are checked into the ILS, although their routing is maintained through Microsoft Outlook. In some cases, where publishers will not send e-subscriptions to a central e-mail address for re-distribution, individuals receive their "copies" at their desktops. The serials staff, however, centralizes the claiming, adds and removes users, and resolves problems with the vendors in accordance with the site licenses.

The Head of technical services must monitor even more closely the procedures for handling materials in new formats. My own experience at Howrey & Simon for the past two years has included constant training of staff in new skills and modifying procedures as publication formats have changed.

Howrey & Simon's library includes print, CD-ROM, online databases, in-house briefs, E-publications, and Internet subscriptions. An excellent Information Technology division has ensured the best technology for communication, information storage and retrieval.

THE BUSINESS OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC SERVICES AND DATABASE MANAGEMENT

The Howrey & Simon library is moving to a web-based Y2K Integrated Library System (ILS). After long negotiation with vendors, visits to other sites, and demonstration of many products, we have chosen Ameritech's Horizon System for our library catalog database, the online public access catalog.

We project all-staff access to bibliographic records at their desktops among the DC, Los Angeles, and Silicon Valley offices. The Web OPAC is an ideal medium for this goal, giving staff immediate access to our holdings, location of print materials, and the status of received journal issues and current volumes. Staff can use the internet and intranet via the library catalog to link to web sites to which we subscribe and to others for which we have no subscription [meaning we pay-as-we-go?].

In addition, we plan to organize internal documents and papers in a useful Knowledge Network, making the sum of our in-house expertise available to many through thoughtful knowledge management.

Although we still are using MARC formats and the OCLC system, we are looking into new

TECHNICAL SERVICES: ITS ROLE IN LIBRARY BUSINESS IN THE 2000S

Thu-Mai Hoang
Howrey & Simon

> "THE SERIALS STAFF MUST PUT TO USE THEIR GREATER COMPUTER SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE TO MAINTAIN BOTH PRINT AND ELECTRONIC MATERIALS."

possibilities, such as Dublin Core. Our ILS is moving from a UNIX server to NT. Our plan, therefore, includes gaining new knowledge about the NT server, HTML, Java language, and SQL language in order to use the new ILS to its full advantage.

THE BUSINESS OF COLLECTION SERVICES

The various practice groups of the law firm have evolved in different directions. In order to serve their needs, the selection of materials and management of the collection is a team effort, involving the library manager, the head of reference services, the reference librarians, the head of technical services and the acquisitions and serials staff. Each participant gives input and is an essential part of the team. The reference librarians work as liaisons between the practice groups and the rest of the library staff to ensure that everyone's needs are met as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Procedures are in place but flexible, able to accommodate changes as needed. Since the internet and e-publications are becoming more of a focus, delivery of information is faster and full text is available at staff desktops. Because of the availability of other media, we have been able to evaluate and decide on the withdrawal of multiple copies of print materials or even removing some titles completely.

Because of our adaptation to the changes in the acquisition and dissemination of information, the satisfaction level of the attorneys and staff here has remained high. We pride ourselves in our reputation for professional service and continue to strive to make the best, most economical choices possible for our community of users.

CONCLUSION

Again, we ask, "what is the future of technical services?" The answers lie in such goals as (1) constant enhancement of our knowledge and skills in selecting, acquiring, and organizing the newest delivery of materials; (2) applying and maintaining the basic principles used for print materials to online systems; (3) library space management; and (4) further development of end-user access. We see technical services tasks as much more than the clerical tasks of the past, but as the more challenging tasks demanded of automation specialists. Working to complement the firmwide computer departments, the technical services staff has much to add in the control and management of all publication formats. [just a suggestion to avoid technicians and technical, also to avoid computer scientists, which confused me]. ■

THE INTERNET

Mary Ellen Albin
Covington & Burling

WHEN I FIRST BEGAN AS A REFERENCE LIBRAR-
IAN AT COVINGTON & BURLING four years ago,
after having been away from the library field for sev-
eral years, I was excited to learn that we had the
ability to access the Internet. This was a cumber-
some and time-consuming process, using a Telnet
connection to LYNX, a DOS-based browser, but I
felt that I was on the cutting edge. Now, I am on
the Internet so many times a day that I seldom even
think about how many changes this has brought in
the way that we provide reference service. Inter-
net access has not only changed the way that we
think about providing service to our clients, but has
shaped the types of services available.

The reference staff at Covington, like those
at many libraries, uses the Internet daily. This
has changed the way that we "do reference" in a
variety of ways. The first and most obvious is that
we are able to obtain documents quickly and eas-
ily that we would not otherwise have been able
to get without a great deal of work. No longer does
a request for a newly enacted UN resolution or
recent WTO decision mean hours of research,
letters and a series of phone calls to every friend
or contact who might know where to obtain an
elusive document. The Internet has also made it
easier to get documents from sources much clos-
er to home. We used to send messengers to fed-
eral agencies, congressional offices and the
Supreme Court to pick up press releases, texts of
speeches and opinions. Now, of course, we just go
right to the web site (along with everyone else in
the country), and usually find what we need.

The Internet has also changed the way the
Library provides certain services. We no longer
maintain filing cabinets full of current federal
tax forms - we download most from the IRS web-
site. The same is true for civil subpoena forms,
forms for admission to practice and other similar
items. Having access to the Internet has also
changed the way we use online services. We no
longer use proprietary software to access many
online services, such as Dialog or Dow Jones.
This permits the online services to make improve-
ments to their interfaces more easily. When we
do use software, we are usually able to download
the most current version right from the web. The
Internet also provides easy access to Lexis-Nex-
is and Westlaw for our attorneys working from
home or on the road.

However, the usefulness of the Internet has
far surpassed mere ease of obtaining specific doc-
uments. Only last year, we subscribed to a num-
ber of paper newsletters from BNA. This year,
we maintain an e-mail routing list of individu-
als who receive an e-mail containing the high-
lights of each issue as soon as it comes out. By
clicking on a link embedded in the e-mail mes-
sage, users are brought right to the BNA sign-in
screen and can read the full text of the newslet-
ter. We also have a subscription to several
Matthew Bender titles available on the Internet,
and have plans for obtaining subscriptions to
other subject databases.

Our plans for the Firm's Intranet also chal-
lenge us to think about new ways to provide
information. Our goal is to have as much infor-
mation as possible available to the users when they
log into their computers, whether from their
office or at home.

Like all good things, the Internet has also
brought new challenges for us. Because we are now
able to do so much more, more is expected of us.
Whether it's the new associate who just knows
that the form he needs is somewhere on the web,
or the intellectual property partner who requests
that we search the entire Internet for suspected
trademark infringements, our users know that we
can navigate our way quickly and easily through this
ever-expanding universe of information. Our chal-
lenge as information professionals is to make sure
that we keep up with ever more rapid change. ■

Telesec

REAL KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT EXPLORED

Alyson B. Danowski, MSLIS, JD
Collier, Shannon, Rill & Scott

"PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE ORGANIZATION NEED TO BE INVOLVED FROM THE START."

ON NOVEMBER 15TH, THE SLA'S WASHINGTON CHAPTER sponsored a presentation on Knowledge Management (KM). LLSDC members were graciously given the SLA member price for attending and the turn-out was impressive.

There were Librarians from military, corporate, law, school, and association libraries. Held at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the morning session began with presentations by three Librarians from three different types of libraries and segued into a lively panel discussion. This article will emphasize that portion of the program that discussed KM in a law firm setting, merely touching on the highlights of the other portions.

The first to speak on "Best Practices for Starting and Running a Knowledge Management Program" was Lynne Davis-Gabriel, Client and Information Services Manager at McGuire, Woods, Battle & Boothe LLP. Setting the tone of the session, Ms. Davis-Gabriel offered a practical definition of KM (from O'Dell and Grayson's If Only We Knew What We Know) which she has found encompasses the two key elements of KM:

1. "a conscious strategy"
2. "to improve organizational performance".

The key strengths Librarians possess that make them the appropriate Person in their organizations to run KM programs were enumerated. The strengths include: structuring information/building taxonomies, training, technology, and, their role as "information broker" within their organization. Two perceived weaknesses that Librarians need to overcome to prove to their organization that they are right for the KM job are ironic, given the definition of KM:

1. they are not being in a position to either influence or implement corporate-wide strategy, and
2. they are not a part of change management and leadership.

So what to do? What Librarians do best - research! Find out all you can about KM. It was pointed out that there is a lot of information out there on KM. Ms. Davis-Gabriel offered her own recommendations of sources she has found particularly helpful as they provide practical, real-world advice and stories. These sources included two books (Working Knowledge, Davenport and Prusak, HBS Press, 1998, and, If Only We Knew What We Know, O'Dell and Grayson, Free Press, 1998) and four web sites (www.knowledge-nurture.com, www.kmworld.com, www.brint.com/km, and www.kmmag.com). Armed with information, it is possible to overcome the perceived weaknesses. How? By making sure you have buy in and support from the executive level. As Ms. Davis-Gabriel pointed out, ad hoc KM cannot, by definition, exist. People throughout the organization need to be involved from the start. Build a KM team using people from the Library, Human Resources, Information Technology, Finance and the user community. Find your champions among the groups in your firm and use them to make a "Needs Assessment". A "Needs Assessment" is a tool to assess your organization's current information capabilities and needs. Not only talk to your champions among the firm's groups, talk to as many people as possible to find out how information flows, and doesn't flow, within the organization. Types of questions suggested include:

1. what specific types of information do they feel they need but don't have, or, that they have a hard time tracking down;
2. what specific types of information do they feel they don't need that they receive;
3. when someone leaves or joins the firm, what information is most critical;
4. how do groups currently share knowledge; and,
5. what kinds of barriers exist that inhibit sharing knowledge?

To make the most of a Needs Assessment, Ms. Davis-Gabriel suggests continuing to ask questions until you see patterns emerge, then follow up and expand on them. Using these answers/patterns, focus on your organizational strategy and build an outline of the types of KM needs that you find. You can then use this outline to set concrete goals for your organization, and decide what it will take to achieve those goals. Value proposition statements are a good way to articulate the goals and the means to those goals (e.g. "If we do X, we will get Y in return."). It's also a good way to get a handle on estimating costs and benefits. Ms. Davis-Gabriel cautions that when looking at costs and returns on the investment not to forget the "soft costs" (such as staff time) nor the intangible benefits (such as staff retention). A "quick win" may be needed to show your organization that the time, money and effort going into this lengthy and expensive endeavor will be worth it. A representative project that fits into the big picture of KM can prove the worth of KM for your organization. Ms. Davis-Gabriel discussed a database project and their intranet project to illustrate how you can quickly demonstrate to your organization the ben-

Lexis full page ad

TRANSITIONING FROM LAW LIBRARIANSHIP TO SCHOOL LIBRARIANSHIP

Margo L. Chisholm
Dumfries Elementary
School Library

"THE LIBRARY IS ALWAYS OPEN FOR TEACHERS TO SEND STUDENTS IN FOR BROWSING."

HELLO FROM DUMFRIES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, Virginia! Last summer I decided to switch gears and I began applying for Librarian positions with local public and private schools in the northern Virginia area. I knew it might be difficult for me to find a School Librarian position, as I had no experience working in schools. However, this did not deter me because I knew if I could get an interview, I was half way to finding a position in a school. I was optimistic because I had read many articles about the teacher shortage, including one article about a shortage of school librarians. After an interview with the principal and assistant principal at Dumfries, I was hired as the school librarian. I started the day after Labor Day 1999 and have been enjoying it ever since.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

There are many new expectations of me as a school librarian and yet many are the same that I faced in the law firm. My first project was to catalog all the new CD-ROMs that came in over the summer. The teachers wanted access to the material to begin lessons and planning. I had quite a cart full but I managed to finish it and make it available to them. Thankfully, I have ten years of library experience to back me up on the job because all in all I feel like a new librarian –green—just out of library school at my first job. I am learning on the job what is expected of me as the one responsible for running the library and teaching information skills to the students. As with those who are new to law librarianship, there is a whole new vocabulary to learn in school. Instead of words like treatise, subsequent, and shepardizing I am learning the meaning of works like curriculum mapping, instructional objective, and standards of learning.

I work in a school of approximately 600 students with one assistant in the library. I work with students from kindergarten through 5th grade and the teachers and other staff who need to find materials in the library. Answering reference questions is not the primary function of a school librarian. The primary function is teaching the information management process. Instead of lawyers and law students I am working with 2nd through 5th graders teaching them the basics of what Prince William County calls the Information Management Process (IMP). The IMP is the process of clarifying the information need, accessing and retrieving the resources, evaluating and analyzing the resources and bringing it all together in an end product which in elementary school is the research report. Doesn't that

sound familiar to all librarians who teach legal research skills? However, in my information skills class I have to worry about students who can't stop talking or pay attention instead of attorneys who can't stay awake.

We use a concept called flexible scheduling to work with the classes. In the library we have a weekly schedule posted on the wall with half-hour blocks. Teachers come in and sign up for a time that works best with their schedule. I also use a planning book to schedule classes in advance for the coming weeks. Since kindergarten and 1st grade do not read and the teachers want them to have a story time each week, I have modified the flexible schedule for them and assigned them a permanent library time. The literature recommends flexible scheduling to allow the library to become a research center to be used as needed by the teachers and students. For example, one teacher I worked with sent her class in small groups to work on a project and I assisted them while they were in the library. Another teacher wanted a series of classes on genres and we started with fairy tales and will move through the different genres to expose her second grade to the different kinds of literature. I talked about the elements of fairy tales, I read them a fairy tale and they checked out fairy tales to read. The library is always open for teachers to send students in for browsing and check-out. I have mini-library lessons planned for the classes that sign up for a library time but do not have a research agenda.

TROUBLESHOOTING

I am expected to be able to troubleshoot and repair all the media equipment that the teachers use in the classroom: TVs, VCRs, overhead projectors, slide projectors, computers and printers. Although TVs and VCRs are new to my repetoir I am still assisting users with the equipment and am expected to make them perform when something isn't working. I do not troubleshoot the computer network as each school has a technical assistant responsible for the network. I am very pleased with all the computer equipment at Dumfries Elementary. In the library we have eight computers available for students to access the online catalog and the internet. My assistant and I each have our own computer with color printer. We also have another computer we reserve for teachers when they need to use a computer due to traveling from school to school or the computer in the classroom is having problems. The student computers are networked to a laser color printer in the library. In addition

there is a computer lab for teaching classes. I trained the 2nd - 5th graders how to use the online catalog in the computer lab. I obtained permission from each teacher to use his or her assigned computer lab time to teach the students how to use the online catalog. I realized early on that I could not let the students use the online catalog until they had proper training so I prohibited use of the online catalog until they had their training. Some of the students did not know the meaning of the word training so I began by explaining what training was and why we were doing it. I plan to design another lesson for them after the first of the year to test their knowledge and ability with the online catalog. They will have had plenty of time to familiarize themselves with the catalog while in the library browsing or doing assigned research projects. I teach this lesson in the computer lab.

TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

Another difference is the way a librarian assists the patrons. In school the objective is to teach children library skills that they will carry with them to middle school, high school and beyond. Since every question posed by a student is a teaching opportunity, I don't jump to show them where a book is or do it for them as I did in the law library or the public library. If a student is looking for a book, I ask them to check the online catalog, write down the call number or book's address and go and find it on the shelf. I tell them to come back if they cannot find the book. When they return, I ask them to repeat the steps they took as I observe, guiding them when they reach the point where the search process broke down. Many times I see the book on the shelf, but I tell them they must find it and it is on the shelf. I wait until they find it for themselves or talk them step by step through the process. The kindergarten and 1st grade are gradually introduced to the IMP through story-time and focusing the library concepts like fiction, nonfiction, call number, author, and illustrator.

Before I started I really had no idea what would be expected of me or what I was supposed to do in the school. I was a little worried because I had no vision. However, soon after I arrived at the school my imagination awoke and the ideas started flowing. I began to learn how to proceed and what expectations the teachers had of me. I document everything I do so I will not have to reinvent my lesson plans next year. I expect this year to be bumpy, but next year to be smooth. I am very fortunate to have a Library Assistant with seven years of experience who I rely on to help me learn many new tasks. There are approximately seventy-five school librarians in the system, but there is no Library Supervisor in the administration, so as a result communication channels are missing. This results in librarians working in isolation. Unless one has a good support network already established, new librarians receive no guidance from anyone - another reason I am thankful for my 10 years of experience. There is an established association called the Prince William Library Association, but as usual it is difficult to attend meetings and recruit members to volunteer. However, there is nothing unfamiliar about this to those who work with voluntary associations. The old argument over the validity of the MLS degree is also tossed around among school librarians. Some things never change.

SALARIES AND ACCREDITATION

I really, really like what I am doing so the financial transition to a lower salary has not impacted me. The pay scale for school librarians does not match that of law librarians who work in the District of Columbia. The salaries for school librarians vary among school districts and salaries also depend on years of experience and degrees earned. I received salary credit for two master's degrees and the calendar years that I worked as a librarian. I did not earn credit for a year of experience when I transitioned from one job to another during the calendar year. School librarians who work in the public schools are paid more than those who work in private schools. However, one should factor in that school librarians work ten months of the year instead of twelve. One can request one's salary to be paid out over twelve months. I won't know until February if am fully accredited or provisionally accredited to teach library information skills in the public schools. The school system submitted all my credentials to the Virginia Department of Education and after they review my degrees, my transcripts and my experience I will learn where I stand. If I am provisionally accredited, I will have three years to meet the requirements for full accreditation. In addition, Prince William County required 30 hours of conditioning education per year. Teachers will not be offered a contract at the end of the year unless the continuing education hours have been met. This is a very big requirement. The school system offered many opportunities to meet this requirement however; this required time is done outside of school hours.

Since school systems operate on very tight budgets, the perks of having professional mem-

"THE SCHOOL OFFERS PROFESSIONAL LEAVE FOR CONFERENCES WITH THE PRINCIPAL'S PERMISSION."

berships paid by one's employer or attending conferences on the employers' expense account do not exist in a school system. The school offers professional leave for conferences with the principal's permission. And the vendors are not knocking on my door with new products and services because purchasing authority is in the hands of the central office and the principal. The old story of management not knowing or appreciating what the library does is the same in school. I have read articles about how to communicate and market library services to the teachers and to the principal, the same theme that exists in every library everywhere. Some teachers do not send their classes to the library and it is up to me to seek them out and communicate to them how the library can support their curriculums. Educating staff about the internet and its use in the classroom is a responsibility of the school librarian. Teachers are overwhelmed with curriculum requirements from both the state and the school district. It is difficult for them to set aside time to surf the web for appropriate sites for students to use, in addition to instructing them how to search and access the information on the web. School librarians can fill this gap by supporting and suggesting ways to use the internet. The variable factor is grade level. Second graders have difficulty with the keyboard because their fingers are small and letter arrangement is confusing. They spend alot of time searching for a letter on the keyboard. For example, one class was doing animal research and needed a picture of their animal. They were willing to take a black and white photocopy until I suggested the web. We used Yahooligans to find animal pictures and we printed them with the color printer. The whole class was very delighted with their pictures. I used that opportunity to educate the students about what is available to them on the web. Each encounter with a student is an opportunity to inform and educate. I take this seriously because there is much talk about the information haves and have-nots. Many of the children at our school probably do not have access to a computer at home considering that over 50% of the students at Dumfries qualify for reduced lunch. The school can educate them, and in the future many will be part of the information haves. This is similar to the mission of the public libraries at the beginning of the 20th century. Books were not a commodity that was accessible to many people at that time, but the public library movement opened the doors to education and entertainment for many people and the public libraries did not discriminate based on their socio-economic class.

The schools will do the same in the information age.

So...

I used to do legal research and now I read stories to kids. It does not sound glamorous or cutting-edge, but there is nothing better than reading a good story to a child. A love of literature is the most important library skill a librarian can give to a child. The library is full of good books; it is my mission to find that one book that will hook a child to the joys of reading for the rest of his or her life. Wow, what a job!

If you have any questions or comments you can email me at chishoml@pwcs.edu

P.S. I'm not completely letting go of my law library roots. I applied for a citizen position on the Alexandria Law Library Board. I was appointed to the Board and will attend my first meeting in January. ∎

efits of an organization-wide KM program. Beyond the law firm realm (does such a thing exist?!), other types of organizations are also embracing KM, and making it a very real part of the way they do business. Jean Tatalias, Director, Information Management of The MITRE Corporation, and Nancy Holland, Director, Global Knowledge Exchange/Research Strategies of KPMG, shared their experiences with KM in the context of their large, international organizations. Both agreed with Ms. Davis-Gabriel that one of the first steps was to gain buy-in from top level executives as KM is an expensive and time-consuming proposition which needs to be embraced at all levels. If there is buy-in from the top, budgets will be possible and the altering of work processes can be more easily accomplished. By the time Ms. Holland, the last speaker, was finished with her presentation, questions and comments were flying fast and furious so all three speakers reassembled as a panel. A working knowledge of what KM is, how it can benefit your organization, and how to implement it within your organization were the lessons learned from this excellent SLA program. While most KM studies and war stories come from the trenches of corporate America, it was reassuring to hear from a Law Librarian that it is also happening in law firms. KM is an organizational direction that must be chosen by the top level management, but it is also a direction that can be led by Librarians. ∎

> "EACH ENCOUNTER WITH A STUDENT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO INFORM AND EDUCATE."

A LIVELY DISCUSSION OF LAW STUDENTS' LEGAL RESEARCH SKILLS produced new information for this librarian, and more understanding in the group, for the challenges we face. The PLL and Academic SIS's recently held a brown bag roundtable discussion on the topic of Lexis/Westlaw training. Too often it appears that the summer and new associate uses costly online research programs as their first avenue of exploration on an assignment. Knowing that the law library holds a multitude of resources, such as digests and treatises "to dig into," librarians are baffled that they show little initiative in using these print resources to help frame the research question and use as a basis to find statutes, regs and cases. Frequently, the new associate turns to the most expensive research tool first.

Online Training for Real-Life Use

The academic law librarians point out that only recently have the vendors placed any limits on the free flow of online searching and printing to law students, and academics welcome some constraints in order to shift the focus to the multitude of methods and rich resources available. And there are other obstacles to research skill development in law schools. The basic legal research class is required, but in some schools, it is, unfortunately, pass/fail. In addition, academic librarians see varying support among professors for research skills development. For example, the academic librarian may prepare a presentation on the myriad sources on securities law. Scenario One shows the librarian and professor presenting as a team, and all students remain attentive and learning. Scenario Two (not an unusual occurrence) shows the professor leaving the presentation and only a handful of students remain till the end.

Firm librarians shared various methods for enhancing Lexis/Westlaw training. Most of us prefer not to give out passwords until the new associate completes a training class to learn cost-effective searching, primarily because online research is charged to the client in firms, and they have not had to learn how to estimate the cost of a search. One firm gives them a 'training/practice' password for a month, to help them practice before starting to charge the client. Others plan short, focused topical seminars to highlight resources from Lexis, Westlaw, internet, and print and cd-rom on the topic. Vendor training is very helpful, and the reps provide needed continuing assistance. Our mutual hope is to teach our attorneys to know when to use the excellent and free research tools, when online is the only way to go, and to be flexible and thorough. We all enjoyed comparing notes, and seeing the others' perspectives on our mutual goals, and wish to continue our discussions. ∎

PLL/ACADEMIC SIS BROWN BAG

Patricia Gudas-Mitchell
Piper Marbury Rudnick & Wolfe LLP

> **"FREQUENTLY, THE NEW ASSOCIATE TURNS TO THE MOST EXPENSIVE RESEARCH TOOL FIRST."**

Wash. Doc. Service

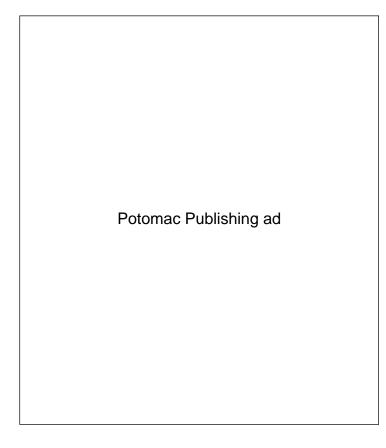# FROM LAWYER TO LIBRARIAN IN 100 "EASY" STEPS

Mindy Klasky
Arent Fox Kintner Plotkin & Kahn

WHEN I WAS ACCEPTED TO LIBRARY SCHOOL AT CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY, I called my then significant-other and announced the great news. He was less than enthusiastic. When I complained about his response, he told me that I was wasting my time getting an MLS. He said, "The only librarians I know are people who tried and failed at something else."

Two months later, having tossed that relationship firmly in the trash, I began library school. After a few weeks of classes, I realized that my ex had one shadow of a point - most of the people in library school had had prior careers.

WHAT I WAS

Ten years ago, I started my legal practice as a trademark and copyright attorney. Intellectual property was perfect for me. I was interested in marketing and communication. I enjoyed research, and I loved counseling clients on their legal and business issues.

Although I started out as a transactional lawyer, my work gradually shifted toward litigation. My hours got longer and longer. I began to travel more. I attended hearings at the drop of a hat. I litigated in Kansas City for three weeks one summer, toting litigation bags to and from the court in heat and humidity that made Washington, D.C. look like Anchorage, Alaska.

And I began to wonder if lawyering was right for me.

WHAT I SAID

I launched the usual career search strategies: I complained to friends for months on end. I read through the classified ads, cover-to-cover for six consecutive weeks, learning what jobs existed in the Wild World beyond legal practice. I compiled lists of the things I loved about my job, and the things I'd grown to dislike. I bought a Silver Anniversary copy of *What Color is Your Parachute*, and I worked through the exercises.

And finally, after months of angst, I had an epiphany. I was eating dinner with one of my endlessly patient friends. I told her, "I want to find something where I can still use my legal background. I want to find something like… being a law librarian."

I don't know why it took me so long to hit upon this solution. After all, I'd relied on law librarians throughout my practice. I'd worked in libraries in elementary school and junior high. I'd been in and out of the Library of Congress dozens of times in the preceding year. Nevertheless, it took me months to recognize my future.

That night, heart pounding, I left the restaurant and drove to a bookstore. (The public library closed at 6:00, but the bookstore was open until 11:00.) I pulled a copy of *Peterson's Guide* off the shelf, and I read about local library school programs. I requested applications the next day, solicited recommendations the following week, and completed my applications in a fortnight.

WHAT I AM

And I've found that I love being a librarian. I enjoy research, and I love counseling clients on their legal and business issues. (Sound familiar?)

As a fringe benefit, I find time to live my life. I am able to spend time with family and friends. I complete quilting projects. I write novels – my first, The Glasswrights' Apprentice, will be published in July. And every so often, an associate appears in my office with a sheepish grin on his or her face. My office door is closed, and the associate says, "How did you make the decision to leave practice?" I tell them this story, and I assure them that I've never regretted my transition.

I would not forfeit the time I spent as a lawyer. It taught me how to write. It taught me how to negotiate. It taught me how to fight for causes I believe in. Most importantly, though, it made me the librarian I am today. ■

Do You Have Issues with Training Patrons to Use Online Databases? Let's Do Lunch!

On October 26th, several librarians gathered at Arent, Fox to discuss Lexis and Westlaw training issues at a brownbag lunch jointly sponsored by Academic SIS and PLL. About half were from academic libraries, with American, Catholic and Georgetown universities being represented. The discussion was fast (not to say furious!) with contributions from every quarter. What we learned was that we all have to deal with training our patrons, be they students or attorneys, to use online databases efficiently and many issues that we see in an academic setting are played out in firms as well.

Lexis and Westlaw are not the only Source of Legal Information

A timeless point made by both firm librarians and academic librarians is that patrons go to Lexis and Westlaw first, rather than thinking about other sources of information that may be more efficient for a given project. Patrons also don't seem to realize that there **are** other sources besides going online; sometimes the same information is contained in a cd-rom database or printed volume in the library. Why incur online fees if you can find things another way? Patrons also seem to linger on Lexis and Westlaw, thus running up costly charges, as well as wasting their time. Selecting the proper database to search, using services such as "locate" or "find" to keep costs down and formulating searches before going online were all identified as key points to stress in training. One participant shared a guideline she gives to patrons: "If you've performed more than five searches on a topic, get off the database and figure out what's wrong!"

Internet Searching is Becoming More Useful and More Used

Although the original focus of the discussion was Lexis and Westlaw, it's pretty much impossible to get a group of librarians together without the Internet rearing its head. Law students are increasingly comfortable with using the Internet, for their personal interest and for legal research. Some schools are offering Internet training sessions, and they have been well attended. Use of the Internet is not confined to academia, however. More firms are training their attorneys to use the Internet for basic legal research, i.e. pulling Supreme Court or other federal cases. The Internet is much less expensive to use than Lexis or Westlaw, however, its organizational features

leave much to be desired! One firm has instituted "research one-shots," 30-45 minutes of training that allow attorneys to get the information they need, without having to commit to long sessions that may not fit into their schedules. Web searching skills have been a focus of these short training opportunities.

Efficiency is the Goal in Online (and other) Searching

One of the themes of the discussion seemed to be the need for greater efficiency in searching for legal information. Training that centers on developing good general research skills, as opposed to product-specific research skills, is what is really needed. There also seems to be a lack of direction in the way patrons begin their research; knowing how to start is half the battle. In addition, greater efficiency throughout the research process is needed: it helps no-one to tie up a printer for hours printing articles that aren't really necessary.

Getting to Know You...

In addition to sharing information about Lexis and Westlaw training issues, the brownbag lunch was also designed to allow librarians from different environments to get to meet one another. Speaking from an academic point of view, it's hard to keep track of all the firm librarians, where they're working, what sort of work they do (ILL, reference, legislative, etc.), what part of town they're in, and having some faces to go with the names in the LLSDC directory was very helpful. I'm sure the firm folks would say the same thing about academics (the Georgetown, George Washington, George Mason thing is confusing enough for those of us in academia, let along for those of you in other settings). Each group has a lot to share with the other; again speaking from an academic perspective, it helps us to know what our students will be doing in a law firm when they graduate and what sort of technology they might be using there, so we can better prepare them to be effective searchers and effective attorneys.

Can I See You Again?

Interest was expressed on the part of both academic and firm librarians in meeting again to discuss issues relating to both settings; one suggestion involved a meeting concerning preparing students for their summer associate activities. If you have any interest in further Academic SIS/PLL discussions, feel free to contact me at 202/662-9142 or ryan@law.georgetown.edu. ■

ONLINE DATABASES BROWN BAG

Susan Ryan
Georgetown University
Law Library

"TRAINING THAT CENTERS ON DEVELOPING GOOD GENERAL RESEARCH SKILLS, AS OPPOSED TO PRODUCT-SPECIFIC RESEARCH SKILLS, IS REALLY WHAT'S NEEDED."

WEST **FULL PAGE AD**

MEMORIAL: HELEN PHILOS

Jill McC. Watson
ASIL Library

American Society of International Law Librarian **Helen Staley Philos** died Thursday, December 9, 1999 at the age of 85. She had moved from the Washington area some years ago to be near family in Cape Cod.

Helen was the Librarian at the American Society of International Law from 1962-1987, when she retired at age 73. During that time, almost everyone in Washington who had international law questions probably consulted her at some point. From the moment she started working in the one-year-old Tillar House library on Embassy Row, and for the next twenty-five years, she essentially built the collection from a core of about 1000 books to 22,000 when she left. She shepherded the library through the "information explosion" during a parallel period of "information inflation," when international law publications multiplied in number, while increasing in cost up to 1000%.

Over the years Helen proved to be a willing and tireless resource for authors, many of whom gratefully sent copies of their books to the ASIL library upon publication. In 1969 she assisted Kurt Schwerin of Northwestern University School of Law on the revision for the third edition of his Classification for International Law and Relations, which is the basis of the ASIL library's organization. In 1974 she prepared the extensive and excellent "Selected Bibliography on the Arab-Israeli Conflict and International Law" for inclusion in a multi-volume work on that subject.

During her twenty-five years at ASIL she enjoyed the heartfelt appreciation of four Executive Directors, including Judge Stephen Schwebel, who went on to become President of the International Court of Justice in The Hague; she reassured participants in 25 Jessup International Moot Court competitions; worked with library committees in myriad forms and part-time assistants both helpful and hair-raising. She once had, in the 1960s, two groups of students, one Israeli and the other Palestinian, sharing the table in the Reading Room, and was gratified to see a real friendship grow out of their heated discussions.

I was fortunate to have Helen as mentor, co-worker and friend during my first and her last six years with ASIL. She taught me not only how to navigate the byzantine byways of international law research, but also how to nurture a small but unique library with very limited financial resources.

The qualities that made Helen a great librarian—her intelligence, her encyclopedic memory, her patience, her thrill in the reference chase, her tenacity in stalking the elusive fact, and above all her cordiality and generosity to her patrons and colleagues who quickly became her friends—have been and will continue to be missed. ■

LAW LIBRARIANS' SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, D.C. BOARD MEETING

PRESENT: Brian Baker, Carolyn Ahearn, Leslie Lee, Karen Silber, Nancy Crossed, Herb Somers, Bill Grady, Ann Green, Debbie Trocchi, Beatrice Wise, Roger Skalbeck.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by President Baker at 9:14 a.m.

MINUTES: The motion to accept the August minutes as corrected carried.

OFFICER'S REPORT

PRESIDENT'S REPORT B. Baker reported that the Opening Banquet is sponsored by LEXIS and it's almost maxed. B. Baker also reported for L. Davis-Gabriel the names for the nominations committee. A motion to accept the nominations committee passed. The **Directory** is almost done.

TREASURER'S REPORT B. Fisher absent and sent to B. Baker a report but the fax was unclear - need to fill in numbers.

ASSISTANT TREASURER'S REPORT L. Lee reported the deposit made in the checking account.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY'S REPORT N. Crossed sent a check to the Myra Wilson Library School Scholarship fund.

MANAGEMENT COMPANY REPORT

DEBBIE TROCCHI reported that there are 770 members and 90 subscribers to *Lights*. The September issue of *Lights* went out on Monday. There was a discussion of changes to the new leadership list - should be ready for next meeting. Everyone should have received a new LLSDC Procedures Manual in the mail. The Society's Publications and Directory are on schedule.

A motion to approve new members passed except the three in question, one opposed. There was a discussion on membership status and B. Grady will look at the Constitution for next meeting to see what it says about various titles for membership.

OLD BUSINESS

LAPTOPS discussion on leasing/purchasing/used. The *Lights* editor needs one. It was the consensus of the Board that one laptop will be purchased with a modem and shared between the Recording Secretary and the *Lights* editor. It was also the consensus of the Board to spend no more than $2000 for a new laptop and that the purpose was for word processing therefore it would not need a lot of memory or extra programs. A motion to spend no more than $2000 for a new laptop including a service contract, or pick a used one from a reputable law firm passed.

HOTLINE It's quite expensive for the Hotline and most members look at the web pages for the information. C. Ahearn will look into history of Hotline; B. Baker will call VoiceTol to ascertain how many calls are received monthly for jobs and will e-mail the Board will statistics. L. Lee does not recall making any deposits for fees brought in from income for the Hotline. B. Baker would like to cancel the costs to employers of announcing jobs on the Hotline.

E-COMMERCE The Society would use E-commerce for payment methods. Most E-commerce packages are for businesses that sell products and R. Skalbeck doesn't think that it would benefit us at this time. B. Baker wanted more information on how credit card payments would be handled such as fees, processing, etc. R. Skalbeck will get more information and the Board will make a decision later.

LIGHTS ON THE WEB B. Wise is compiling an author/title/subject index. There was discussion of putting up the lead articles of the current issue and delay putting the remainder on the web by a month or two. The question was raised regarding subscription loss or increase and copyright. B. Baker suggested PDF format and delaying one issue. There was also a discussion of surveying past writers b/c B. Wise wants to put the past years issues on the web. Further discussion of adjusting our copyright to let future authors know that *Lights* will be on the web. Motion that we publish the past volume of *Lights* and forward issues with a four week delay in PDF format passed.

NEW BUSINESS

W. Grady brought up cash reserves and money in the LLSDC accounts. A discussion ensued on why the Society needs two full years of savings, and using the money more constructively to include scholarships, funding banquets and conferences, and having the SIS spend more money.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn carried; the meeting was adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

ITEMS DISTRIBUTED: Agenda; Memo from Debbie Trocchi dated 9/21/99; e-mail from L. Davis-Gabriel to B. Baker re: slate for the nominations committee for the 2000 elections; Operating budget-expenses from B. Fisher; Chart detailing the Overview of Existing Library Association Newsletters on the Internet.

NEXT MEETING Wednesday, November 17, 1999 at 9:00 a.m. at the University of the District of Columbia, 4200 Connecticut Ave., NW., UDC Faculty Room, Building 39, Room 208.

NOVEMBER 17, 1999 – FINAL COPY

PRESENT: Brian Baker, Carolyn Ahearn, Barbara Fisher, Leslie Lee, Karen Silber, Nancy Crossed, Herb Somers, Bill Grady, Ann Green, Dennis Feldt, Debbie Trocchi, David Mao.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by President Baker at 9:15 a.m.

MINUTES: The motion to accept the September minutes as corrected carried.

Discussion on the Union List of Legislative History and the Legislative SIS budget. It was decided that inputting would be done by local contractors as would the photocopying and binding and to bypass the publisher. Also, it was decided to use a three-ring binder for ease of supplementation. Paper, PDF and electronic formats were discussed. The price was decided on $75 for members and $100 for non-members. **Motion** to authorize Legislative SIS to spend up to $15,000 to bring forth the next edition passed with the note that if they need more money to come back to the Board.

OFFICER'S REPORT

PRESIDENT'S REPORT B. Baker reported that the Opening Reception was a great success. B. Baker reported for L. Davis-Gabriel that the nominations committee is almost set - they need a candidate for VP/Pres-elect. The Public Outreach will be chaired by Helen Leskovac and the following committees still need chairs: education, audit, social & contemporary issues.

Liaisons for 1999-2000 are as follows (liaisons need to recruit chairs if necessary):

Brian–Arrangements, Contemporary Social Issues, Internet Users Group, Audit, Directory, Placement, Website, Public Outreach
Lynn–Elections, History & Archives
Carolyn–Legislative, Public Relations
Nancy–Foreign & Int'l SIS, Scholarships & Grants
Karen–Education, Joint Spring Workshop
Barbara–New Members, Volunteer Coordinator
Leslie–Publications, Dates, Lights, GLP, COUNSEL
Herb–Academic
Dennis–Mentoring, Federal
Bill–ILL, Bylaws
Ann–Private, Consulting

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT- There was a discussion on getting rid of the job hotline. It was decided to make an announcement in Dates, Lights and on the Listserve. Brian will call Don and inform him that at the end of the first quarter 2000, we would like to do away with it. Barbara will look into cancellation policy.

British Library update: no membership fee for LLSDC members for one more year. Carolyn and Debbie will work together to make an announcement for new members. An article will be written for *Lights*.

TREASURER'S REPORT: B. Fisher reported on accounts and budget. Budget from last year will be used - if changes need to be made, let B. Fisher know.

ASSISTANT TREASURER'S REPORT L. Lee reported on the deposits for October and November into the checking account.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY'S REPORT N. Crossed will make an announcement for *Lights* asking that the Corresponding Secretary be called in order to put events on the master calendar.

MANAGEMENT COMPANY REPORT

Debbie Trocchi reported that there are 793 members and 114 subscribers to *Lights* There was a discussion on membership status and it was decided to have the Membership Committee look into different types of membership and make recommendations (e.g. difference between individual and institutional membership). A **motion** to approve new members passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Laptops B. Baker is still working on getting laptops for the editor of *Lights*. *E-commerce- **R. Skalbeck still working on this issue; B. Wise is working on getting the last four years on* Lights *on the website.*

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn carried; the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

ITEMS DISTRIBUTED: Memo from Debbie Trocchi dated 11/17/99 and October 20, 1999 with a letter dated 11/2/99; Statement of LLSDC Accounts from B. Fisher dated November 1999; LLSDC 1999-2000 General Operating Budget-Expenses from B. Fisher;

NEXT MEETING Wednesday, December 15, 1999 at 9:00 a.m. at the University of the District of Columbia, 4200 Connecticut Ave., NW, UDC Faculty Room, Building 39, Room 208. ■

LIGHTS DEADLINE

■ ■ ■ The deadline for the March/April 2000 *Law Library Lights* is Tuesday, February 15, 2000. For submissions, call Beatrice Wise at 202/383-6868 or e-mail wiseb@howrey.com.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Gina Clair
Morrison & Foerster

MEMBER NEWS

Our thoughts and sympathy go out to the family and friends of **Amelia Sandique-Owens** who passed away on November 28th. She worked for American University law library for 19 years before retiring last year.

LLSDC's great supporter, President from 1994-1995, **Estie Lipsit**, our friend and colleague is leaving the profession. She can be reached at her home, 7220 Pyle Road, Bethesda, MD 20817, 301/229-6558.

Susan van Beek, formerly with Hebb & Gitlin in Hartford, Connecticut, is now with Potter, Anderson & Corroon LLP in Wilmington, Delaware.

Beth Conte, formerly with Howrey & Simon, is now Librarian with Spiegel & McDiarmid.

Sally Hand, formerly with the Embassy of Australia, is now Information Retrieval Specialist with Oliff & Berridge.

Cassandra Harper has become a student at Catholic University.

Lisa Hermes, the former Lisa Reninger, reports a name change for her firm as well. Fox, Bennett & Turner has become Bennett, Turner & Coleman.

Stephanie Paup, formerly at Nixon, Peabody, is now the Assistant Librarian at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom.

Ellen Sweet has taken a position at the U.S. Dept. of Education, National Library of Education.

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Debbie Allen, ILL Technician, Sutherland Asbill & Brennan.

Tracey Gray Bridgman, Resident Librarian, Edward Bennett Williams Library.

Robert Allan Duncan, Library Clerk, Mayer, Brown & Platt.

Marc Syvalia Hyman, Library Assistant, Jenner & Block.

Lesliediana Jones, Ref/Govt Documents Librarian, Jacob Burns Law Library.

Mary Longchamp, Reference Librarian, Shook, Hardy & Bacon.

Carmen McDevitt, Librarian, Sanders, Schnabel, Brandenburg & Zimmerman.

Vicki Severietti, Assistant Librarian, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison.

Paul Silva, Interlibrary Loan Coordinator, Jacob Burns Law Library.

Trina Warden, Reference Librarian, Willkie Farr & Gallagher. ∎

THE PRIVATE LAW LIBRARIES SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION has gotten under way with two social programs and two education programs. So far, all of our events have been well-attended, although there is always room for more people to attend! We look forward to meeting new LLS-DC members throughout the year. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions about the Section or about specific events, please don't hesitate to contact any officer (Mindy Klasky, Janet Baxter, Beth Conte, or Maureen Stellino.)

PLL kicked off the year on October 26 with an education brown-bag lunch program that was jointly hosted with the Academic SIS. The program, which took place at Arent Fox, was attended by nearly 20 people who discussed Lexis-Nexis training at law schools, focusing on what students are being taught, what law firms expect students to know, and how librarians can better prepare law students for the "real world." Many attendees agreed that bridge-building between the Academic and PLL SIS was the best thing to come out of the session, and we look forward to similar programs in the future.

The year continued with a happy hour at Planet Hollywood on November 15. Approximately 20 people found their way to our cheerful balloons, tied to our tables underneath the amused gaze of Whoopi Goldberg, Sylvester Stallone, and dozens of other celebrities. PLL members and others were able to relax, enjoy each other's company, comment on the recent elections, and brace for the rapidly approaching holiday season.

PLL switched back to "education" mode with another brown-bag lunch on December 7 at Beveridge and Diamond. Again, nearly 20 people were in attendance for a lively discussion about negotiating online contracts. Attendees discussed tips and tricks for negotiating away difficult contract terms. They also discussed attempts to better educate vendors about law firms' actual need for online products, including the special circumstances when only a few people or when very many people need access to a single product.

We ended the year on a high note, with our holiday party. This annual kickoff to the holiday season was hosted by Kate Martin and the rest of her staff at Morgan, Lewis & Bockius. Over one hundred members of LLSDC enjoyed turkey and ham sandwiches, hummus, cheese trays, fresh fruit, and a variety of sweets while catching up with friends and co-workers. Following a long-time PLL tradition, we awarded three door prizes (gift certificates to a bookstore.) This year's prizewinners were Shannah Andrews, Laurie Green, and Agnes Thomas.

We have many more events planned for 2000. Beginning in the spring, we will be putting together a nominations committee (to gather and process nominations for officers for the 2000-2001 year!). If you are interested in participating in any of our activities, please do not hesitate to contact us. We hope to see you early and often in the year 2000! ∎

PRIVATE LAW LIBRARIES/SIS NEWS

Mindy Klasky
Arent Fox Kintner
Plotkin & Kahn

A BROWNBAG LUNCH, CO-SPONSORED BY PLL, WAS THE SIS'S SECOND EVENT OF 1999-2000. Approximately thirteen people, about half from academic libraries, attended the noontime session on Lexis and Westlaw training. Look elsewhere in this issue for a more in-depth report on our discussion; suffice it to say here that response to the event was positive and there seems to be interest in future jointly sponsored gatherings. Thanks very much to our PLL hosts, especially Mindy Klasky at Arent, Fox for taking care of the arrangements.

TALKING TO YOUR COMMERCIAL LIBRARY BINDER
Mark your calendars for Thursday, January 27, 2000! Hilary Seo, Preservation Librarian at Georgetown University Law Library will be giving a presentation on issues in library binding. Topics will include: communicating with binders, quality control, understanding library binding industry standards and their changes, materials, binding structures, binding options, economy options, deciding what to cut when you have to cut back, and added services provided by binders.

FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD
In Spring 2000, the SIS will be offering an additional program on preservation issues: this one on book repair (also led by Hilary Seo), a tour of a local library and a spring social event. Ideas for other programs are always welcome. Call Susan Ryan (202/662-9142) with any ideas. ∎

ACADEMIC/SIS NEWS

Susan Ryan
Georgetown Law Library

CORRECTION
We deeply regret the misspelling of Joanne Zich's name in the News of Members portion of the last issue — *The Editor*

LEGISLATIVE/ SIS NEWS

Carole Waesche
Steptoe & Johnson

AS I'M WRITING THIS COLUMN, THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF COMMENT PROGRAMS ON ELECTRONIC LEGISLATIVE RESOURCES IS STILL TWO WEEKS AWAY. Executives representing Congressional Quarterly's CQ.com On Congress will be our first guests, to be followed by Lexis in February, then Westlaw in April or May.

The electronic neighborhood is changing quickly. Legi-Slate is gone; unknown entities are beginning to appear on the Internet. Yet, in other ways, some of the same old questions are still hanging on. What comes first to my mind is, "Why isn't this available through this database?" So at our first business meeting this year, we decided to have three programs, one each with CQ, Lexis and Westlaw. Attendees would bring specific questions on using the service for legislative tracking and research, and a "live" feed would be available for demonstrations. But perhaps most importantly, we decided to request that these meetings be attended not only by account reps, but by members of the executive and editorial staffs. Our goal: instead of librarians gathered around a table, listening and watching a planned demonstration presented by the sales department, the "planners" from CQ, Lexis and Westlaw would listen as library professionals offered comments on better serving our overall research and access needs.

So to those of you who attended the program, I hope it proved valuable and that we achieved our original objective. However, if there are any suggestions or comments regarding topics you would like to see included, or on the format of the program, please forward your comments along via e-mail (cwaesche@steptoe.com) or bring them up at the next business meeting.

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST:

We are being linked to; the list of GPO Congressional Publications for sale on the LLSDC web site now appears in the "Legislative Branch Committee Publications" section of the University of Michigan Documents Center (http://www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Documents.center/fedlegis.html#lpub) and on "The Virtual Chase: Statutory Law and Legislative Information" web page (http://www.virtualchase.com/resources/statutory.shtml).

On November 17, the LLSDC Board approved our proposal to have the Society publish the new edition of *The Union List of Legislative Histories.* ∎

PRINT PUBLICATIONS

Judges and Lawyers Business Valuation Update 1999-
Published monthly by Business Valuation Resources, 7412 S. W. Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway, Suite 106, Portland, OR 97225; 888/BUS-VALU; FAX 503/291-7955.
Price: $189.00 per year.

This newsletter covers all important federal and state appellate cases involving business valuation issues. Not only does it summarize the holdings in these cases, but also provides analysis of the court's opinions from the point of view of the valuation profession. In addition, the newsletter reports specific expert's positions in testimony and the court's reaction. Each issue contains abstracts and commentary on all precedential federal and state cases involving business valuation, a literature and Internet update, news and a calendar update, as well as articles, interviews editorials and special reports.

IP Law Weekly, 1999-
Published weekly (50 issues per year) by American Lawyer Media, 345 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010; 800/888-8300 ext. 6170; Fax: 212/696-1848; E-mail: circ@amlaw.com.
Price: $850.00 per year.

This new weekly publication provides in-depth coverage of judicial, legislative and administrative developments in intellectual property law. Also included are regional reports from around the country, articles and commentary from outside columnists and coverage of moves within law firms specializing in intellectual property law.

ON-LINE SUBSCRIPTION

Your Nation's Courts Online, 1999-
Updated monthly by WANT Publishing Company, Graybar Building - Grand Central, 420 Lexington Avenue, Suite 300, New York, NY 10170; 212/687-3774; Fax: 212/6873779; E-mail: rwant@msn.com; Website: www.courts.com.
Price: ranges from $295.00 to 445.00 depending on the number of simultaneous users.

This web-based research service complements the information available in the familiar *Want's Federal-State Court Directory* and *Directory of State Court Clerks and County Courthouses*, while offering greater timeliness than is available in a print publication. This service includes: names, address and phone numbers of judges, clerks of court and U.S. attorneys; each month includes last month's appointees. Information on federal judges' confirmations/rejections is available within days of the Senate's vote on their nominations. Federal court vacancies and new nominations sent to the Senate are also accessible.

TITLE CHANGE

Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy, 1999-
Published semiannually by the Georgetown University Law Center 600 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001; 202/6629425; Fax: 202/6629492; Email: jplp@law.georgetown.edu.
Price: $25.00 per year.

Formerly the **Georgetown Journal on Fighting Poverty** this new publication began with volume 6, number 1, dated Winter 1999. The last issue of the previous title was volume 5, number 2, dated Summer 1998. ■

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

■ ■ ■ If you have changes in your listing in the 1998-1999 *LLSDC Membership & Law Library Directory*, please contact Scott Larson, Librarian at Beveridge & Diamond, P.C., at 202/789-6166 or at slarson@bdlaw.com.

EYE ON SERIALS

Susan Ryan
Georgetown Law Library

Cal Info

INTERLIBRARY LOAN/SIS NEWS

Keith Gabel
Thompson Coburn LLP

THE LAST INTER-LIBRARY LOAN SIS MEETINGS OF 1999 WERE STRONG IN CONTENT AND IN ATTENDANCE. October brought us together to discuss ways to make the ILL section of the LLSDC website more useful to the specialist, particularly those new to the field. The topic for November was the professional development of inter-library loan specialists. December marked the continuation of the Section's tradition of hosting a holiday party. All three meetings were enthusiastically attended by an unusually vocal crowd, including many new members and faces not seen in awhile.

Ways to use the Web more effectively has long been a task confronting librarians of all stripes. This situation has been no different for the world of inter-library loan. In October, Lee Passacreta of Holland & Knight kindly hosted the Section's meeting that discussed the manner in which our own organization's website could be made more useful for such specialists. Howrey & Simon's Roger Skalbeck, the LLSDC website administrator, was even on hand to lend his technical guidance and expertise. The conversation sprawled over many areas, from which websites could or should be listed, to what kind of detail was necessary for this to be of any value. It was agreed that a temporary committee should be formed to solicit websites of interest and to determine what kind of inter-library loan links should be added to the LLSDC website. Volunteers were enlisted and a course of action was laid for the Spring.

Our November gathering was graciously hosted by Julie McCubbin of LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae LLP. The hour there was dedicated to the professional self-improvement of the inter-library loan specialist. Specifically, we discussed the merits of pursuing the Master of Library Sciences degree. In order to give this issue complete coverage, we had in attendance several members who were either taking their courses now or had recently graduated from school. Also available to us were two guests, Chris Weidman of Holland & Knight and Mindy Klasky of Arent, Fox, Kintner, Plotkin & Kahn. Both of these women had completed their degrees recently and have moved into elevated positions within the field. Between our guests and our own members, a fair view of the value and cost of the MLS was given to all in attendance. It was also demonstrated that, for better or worse, the key to upward mobility in any library hierarchy rested with completing the degree. We were all thankful for the honesty and frankness with which all the participants approached the subject.

As befits the season, all seriousness left us in December, the time of the annual ILL Cookie Party. Along with this event, we cast a new tradition

of having Dannie Young of Shaw, Pittman, Potts & Trowbridge as host. Both elicited a feeling of festiveness and celebration from the membership. Being a purely social event, conversation ranged from holiday bonuses and parties, to more serious topics, such as job searches and moaning about our various workplaces. Even though there was not a drop of eggnog to be found, a good time was had by all. After our conversations had run their course and we were completely filled with sugar, we all, perhaps a bit reluctantly, returned to our libraries in order to complete our day, thankful once again for the camaraderie of our fellow librarians and friends, as well as the joy of the season. ■

chapters of the American Library Association (ALA) to develop a skills assessment program and lobby the various state governments to require certification before someone can call him/herself a librarian. After all, we are all librarians of some sort; so let's go to the lowest common denominator for the basic certification test.

This could cause a hardship for our members. What kind of things would be on an ALA certification exam? Sure, I took cataloging and advanced cataloging in library school, but it has been years since I actually did it. Could I pass such a certification process? I don't know. Public services librarians are more likely to work with amorphous, hard to measure skills. Would we be hurt? Probably.

Would we expect a separate test for a specialty like law librarianship or medical librarianship? It would seem we would need to, in order to provide a measuring stick that illuminates the types of services our specialized skills and additional degrees can provide.

Finally, we would need some sort of enforcement against those practicing librarianship without a license, and those hiring unlicensed librarians in jobs.

I agree. At some point it sounds way too silly. However, if we are serious about these issues, we need serious parameters and rules.

One last thought. If librarians are in such demand right now, why are library schools still struggling with enrollment? It is because so many non-degreed people are calling themselves librarians and taking librarian jobs. Unless this trend is reversed somehow, the professional library schools will not have enough bodies to continue, and our "profession" will suddenly not be one. When that happens, quality services to our patrons will really tumble. ■

OUR SOCIETY'S WEB SITE HAS BEEN AROUND FOR A FEW YEARS NOW, and the advent of a new century seems like the most appropriate time to take stock of where it has been while looking towards where it is heading and what else it could provide.

Our domain name of LLSDC.ORG was initially registered in October of 1994, when the original site was being hosted on a server at Howard University. Those who saw the site back in those days will remember the large and bold maroon LLSDC logo, along with the gray granite-looking background. This look and location remained for close to four years, with content focused on fundamental information about the society, such as leadership information, notices of events and related information.

Today the site looks completely different, with the adoption of a blue color scheme and several substantial changes to the way that it is hosted and updated. Close to two years ago, the site was moved to a commercial Internet host, so that new features and functionality would be easier to update. This move also provided more advanced support functions such as: email accounts using the society's domain name, statistics on site usage, and most importantly the ability to maintain the site with Microsoft's FrontPage software. This software provides advanced programming and site maintenance features, while also making it possible for Web committee members to maintain the site without the need to know extensive HTML coding.

As of January 2000, the site has several key content areas, including the following:

- Materials from past LLSDC events, such as the Internet Resources section of the Legal Research Institute (www.llsdc.org/lri/) and the session on Intellectual Property resources (www.llsdc.org/ip.htm)
- LLSDC Jobline (www.llsdc.org/committees/placement/jobline.htm)
- Leadership information for the society's officers and board members (www.llsdc.org/about/index.html)
- Links to member library web sites for academic, public and private libraries (www.llsdc.org/libraries/)
- Descriptive and leadership information for all Committees (www.llsdc.org/committees/) and Special Interest Sections (www.llsdc.org/sis/)

In addition to this, the site offers a weekly transcription of the Government Printing Office Congressional Publications for sale (www.llsdc.org/gpo/gpocurrent.htm). This major content area replaces "Congress in Print", which is no longer published by Congressional Quarterly. This information is maintained and provided by the Legislative Special Interest Section, with dedicated and regular updates provided by Emily Carr.

The latest addition to the site is a small set of back issues of *Law Library Lights* (www.llsdc.org/lights/), which includes title and author indices for better access to back issues of our society's official publication. As time goes by, this will become more and more valuable, as *Law Library Lights* is not indexed anywhere, and it is not available in electronic format in any online database. To preserve the membership benefit of receiving timely issues *Lights* in print, web site availability of the current issue will be delayed from one to three months beyond the time that printed issues are mailed to members and individual subscribers.

Where we are headed…

In the near future, the Web Committee has plans to work on at least some of the following additions to the site:

- Better site index for easy navigation
- Search interface for the entire site, with a separate search index for the GPO Congressional Publications
- Continued content additions and maintenance for Lights, the calendar and available news of events of interest to members
- Assessment of options for online registration for events, including a possibility for online payment
- More graphics and a more attractive presentation of society information

The society's web site is maintained by the Web Committee, which currently consists of about six members, who each maintain selected elements of the site. For any members who are not on the committee, there are always possibilities for providing content and input on the direction that the site will take. Every SIS and Committee has a separate page and directory where relevant material can be published, and a few groups are already working to gather new material. There is currently ample space for adding new content, so there are no significant limitations to expanding available content.

The web site provides a great opportunity to learn HTML and site maintenance in a real-world situation, and with the use of the FrontPage software and style templates, you don't even need to know much about HTML in order to help provide content. If you have questions about the site, or if you are interested in providing content from your SIS, Committee, from a specialized program, or just for things that you think would benefit the members and other users of the site, just get in touch. Please visit the site to see what is there, and send an email to webmaster@llsdc.org if you have suggestions, comments or questions. Happy New Year! ∎

WEB COMMITTEE UPDATE: LLSDC.ORG YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW…

Roger Vicarius Skalbeck
Howrey & Simon

LAW LIBRARY LIGHTS

Law Librarians' Society of Washington, D.C., Inc.
669 South Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314