

KING COUNTY  
LAW LIBRARY

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2001  
ANNUAL REPORT

  
New Services  

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For a New Century



# New Services For a New Century

King County Law Library - 2001 Annual Report

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## **WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR**

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It is my pleasure to present the 2001 Annual Report of the King County Law Library.

The King County Law Library provides access to legal research resources for the residents of King County at its locations in the King County Courthouse in Seattle and in the Kent Regional Justice Center. A five-member Board of Trustees oversees the Library.

As trustees we determine the goals for the Library, formulate and adopt policies to govern its operation and programs, monitor the progress of programs, ensure that resources necessary for the achievement of the Library's mission are available and used efficiently, and supervise the work of the Library's Director, Jean Holcomb.

### **2001 Annual Report Theme**

*New Services for a New Century* is the theme of the Library's 2001 Annual Report. This year's report describes efforts taken by the Trustees and Library staff to envision and plan for the future. To help us develop these plans, the Library held a series of focus groups to survey the opinions of library users. Information gathered from the focus group project will shape the goals for the 2002-2006 strategic plan development process. Highlights of the year profiled in this report include the redesign of the Library's web site with the debut of the "Not finding what you're looking for" feature, the development of the first Library sponsored CLE program series, the implementation of the second phase of our document delivery service, and the creation of a conference room reservation service. The year ended with news from the *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation* that the Library had been awarded a Community Access to Technology Grant to develop a legal research training center in the Seattle Library geared to the legal research needs of the general public.

### **The Year Ahead**

In the year ahead, the Trustees and staff will investigate ways to ensure that the Library continues to be relevant to all county residents who search for legal information resources in this digital age. As liaisons between the Law Library and the community it serves, the Trustees will work with our users to develop strategies to address challenges to continued growth and development raised by stagnant funding and escalating costs. We are optimistic about the Library's ability to respond to these challenges and are committed to providing ever-improved service.

We have learned how important it is for those who control our funding sources to hear from law library advocates like the members of our community of library users. We intend to continue to communicate the progress of our efforts to stabilize our funding. We believe that the continued support of the community will be critical to the success of these efforts and hope that we will be able to rely on your continued support in this time of change.

We invite your comments and cooperation. Please feel free to contact us individually, or to call or write Law Librarian Jean Holcomb to share your thoughts about the Library.

Terry Lukens, Chair

## BOARD ACTIVITIES

### 2001 Board of Trustees

The Honorable Terence P. Lukens, Chair  
Mary Ann Hyatt, Esq., Vice-chair  
The Honorable Suzanne Barnett  
James L. Brewer, Esq., designee of County Council Chair Pete von Reichbauer  
Nancy Talner, Esq.

The responsibility for overseeing the operation of the King County Law Library rests in the hands of the five Law Library Board Trustees. Although their pictures aren't posted in the Library with those of the Library staff, the Library's Trustees and staff work as a team to further the goals of our organization. While most county law library boards across the country meet annually or quarterly, the members of our Board demonstrate their commitment to fostering change by meeting twice a month. In collaboration with the staff, the Board engages in policy development and strategic planning. The Trustees also provide access to outside expertise and resources that would otherwise be unavailable to the Library or available only at great expense.

The story told in this year's report focuses on the theme of *New Services For New Century*. The Trustees, as representatives of the Library's core constituencies, take a leadership role in ensuring that the Library continually positions itself to meet the changing needs of those who rely on the resources provided by the Library.

### Policy Development

The Board focused throughout the year on strategies to improve the Library's financial position. In addition to the efforts described below to work with the King County Executive and the Metropolitan King County Council, and the State Legislature during the 2001 and 2002 sessions, the Board reviewed internal opportunities to raise revenue. Attention focused on fee based services offered by the Library. Enrollment fees for the Library's Subscriber program had remained constant since the inception of the Subscriber program in 1996. Following a review that included a survey of similar fees charged by peer libraries from across the country, the Board increased the annual enrollment fee by 10% per user from \$50.00 to \$55.00 effective January 1, 2001. The Board also authorized the creation of a conference room reservation program and gave approval for the development and presentation of the first of an ongoing series of Continuing Legal Education Seminars.

The Board engaged in a series of policy considerations. After extensive review of the Library's existing insurance coverage, the Board approved a resolution to become a member of the Washington Government Entity Pool to provide additional protection for the library's assets. We joined the WGEP one week before the Nisqually earthquake occurred. In recognition of the growing role of the Library's web site as a legal research resource, the Board adopted a web site disclaimer policy to alert KCLL web site users of the need to be savvy consumers of web resources. The Board supported the submission of an application to the *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's* Community Access to Technology grant program requesting funds for the development of a legal research and training center geared to the needs of the general public. After the Gates Foundation approved the Library's CAT grant request, the Board authorized the use of funds from the Library's capital reserves account to fund the construction of the training center. The Board met with the leadership of the Courthouse Seismic Renovation project to share concerns about the Library's ability to provide adequate service to its users during the term of the construction project. In preparation for the implementation of the circulation component of the Library's automation system, the Board approved revisions of the circulation rules and approved using the services of Unique Management Services to assist staff in securing the return of overdue materials and in the collection of lost book fees.

Board Activities (continued)

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### **Strategic Planning**

The Board and staff participated in a series of brainstorming exercises that will lead in 2002 to the adoption of a new four-year strategic plan for the Library. The key to being relevant to our users rests in our ability to be futurists and visionaries. We need to be able to imagine what the future holds for our Library and to position ourselves for success in this future.

To create a map of our future, we asked ourselves four critical questions: Who are we as an institution? Where do we want to go as an institution? What do we recognize as our own seminal moments as a public law library? How can we develop the institutional attitude of insurgency needed to face an uncertain future?

As a first step, Board and staff members froze our library at this precise moment in time and listed all of the things we are—not yesterday or tomorrow, but right now. This list became our benchmark against which to measure future change. We “declared a major” by listing all the things our library will be. This is the reality we hope to invent. We listed our postulates about the future of our library. This will be a list of things that have to be true for us to be what we will be. Finally, we listed all of the things that mark us as a radical institution among our peers.

The Board commissioned a focus group study to collect the opinions of library patrons regarding their current and future research needs. Three different focus groups met with a facilitator to discuss their use of the library’s collection and services. The information collected through this activity will help to shape the critical goals that form the framework for our 2002-2006 strategic plan.

### **Financial and Legislative Strategies**

Particular attention in 2001 centered on efforts to develop a variety of strategies to provide adequate funding to support a modern, multi-site law library operation.

Until the Washington legislature authorizes additional funding sources for county law libraries, the Library’s revenues will be insufficient to fully fund the operational costs of our two locations. The Board has worked closely with the County’s governmental relations staff since 1999 on legislation to increase law library funding options.

During the 2001 Legislative session, six hearings before the Senate and House Judiciary committees considered county law library funding proposals. A local option filing fee surcharge bill supported by a broad coalition of county law library supporters stalled in the House Judiciary committee for the third year in a row, after passing the Senate with bipartisan support. With the support of King County and the Washington State, King County and South King County Bar Associations, county law libraries worked to secure the adoption of SB 5309, a bill to increase revenues generated through traffic fees and fines. The hope was that an appropriation would be made to county law libraries in the State Budget from new PSEA account revenues generated through these increases in traffic fees and fines. Although SB 5309 passed, negotiations to add funding for county law libraries to the State Budget failed in the last days of the second special session.

For the 2001 fiscal year, the King County Budget again included funds to support the operations of the Kent Library. With the \$150,000 appropriation, the Board approved the reinstatement of service in Kent during the lunch hour, renewed subscriptions, and prepared a funding request for the 2002 budget cycle for Kent that reflected a 15% reduction in operating costs. The Board also approved mid-year cuts to Seattle Library collection upkeep costs to prevent these costs from exceeding 2001 budget projections.

Over the past year, the Library has successfully cut costs, raised revenues from private sector users, partnered with the King County Library District, secured grants, and continued to explore options for developing additional revenues.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

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### Q Series Circulation Project

In order to "go live" with the circulation module of our new automation software, we needed to clean up and transfer nearly 9,000 patron records from our old Access database. Due to the structure of the new circulation module itself and old data we decided to carry over, we were not able to completely automate this process. Using a data conversion tool provided by EOS (Electronic Online Systems), we were able to move approximately 90% of our existing data into Q electronically. The remaining 10% needed to be keyed in by hand to ensure accuracy. The entire process took nearly six months to complete, making it the largest single circulation project since the initial creation of the Subscriber Program in 1996.

### Q Series Circulation Reports

Once we completed the transfer of existing patron records into the circulation module, we began the process of adapting existing circulation and Subscriber Program reports. We sent three staff members to Crystal Reports training to learn the third-party software needed to create custom Q Series reports.

### Q Series Software Evaluation

Shortly after EOS returned our new SQL server in January, we began systematic testing of all Q modules against the criteria from our original Request For Proposal. Basic functionality in the circulation and cataloging modules was sound but the Web Online Public Access Catalog module and several of the system's reports did not work properly. Thus began a testing process that would last until November. During that period, we were in regular contact with support staff from EOS as we worked together to address these problems.

### Collection Management

Our holdings reflect a typical public law library collection and is comprised of six major categories of primary and secondary law. These include case law, treatises, administrative reports, Washington state materials, other states' materials, and periodicals. Between January 1992 and May 1998, the average cost of a volume of a regional case law reporter rose 66.93% while the Consumer Price Index for that period rose only 24%. Since January of 1998, the cost of a single volume of a regional case law reporter has risen 37%. In the past year alone the per/volume price increased 10%.

Because of both per volume and number of volumes per year increases, the cost of maintaining the regional case law reporter subscriptions between 1992 and 2000 increased by over 98%! The impact of this ongoing case law price escalation forced the Law Library to reexamine the need to have both circulating and non-circulating sets of case law reporters. In January 2001, the Seattle Law Library cancelled subscriptions to the non-circulating sets of 9 regional and state case law reporter series for a projected savings of over \$20,000.00.

The Library has maintained detailed statistics internally for case reporters. Other areas of the legal publishing market are also experiencing similar price increases. For example, the price per volume of the Revised Code of Washington has increased on average over 10% per year since 1998.

Behind the Scenes (continued)

The Internet and other forms of electronic publishing have expanded law library collection purchase options. In the past year, several of the largest free or low-cost Internet legal research services have been purchased by the same multi-national publishing houses that control the print legal publishing market. Because our patrons count on having books available to be checked out, limits exist on the numbers of titles which can be replaced by electronic resources that are available for use only in the library.

Because we are a public library, we must make materials available in multiple formats. Our patrons have a variety of research skills and needs. Some need materials to be available in print format, others are comfortable with CD-ROM or the Internet. For this reason, we need to provide access to both print and electronic resources.

We are committed to providing the necessary updates to case law services, statutory codes and secondary resources. We will continue to scrutinize our relationships with the major vendors and monitor publishing trends. We will continue to collaborate with other law libraries to develop strategies to stretch collection dollars. We will support the publishing efforts of smaller local and regional organizations. The Library continues to explore diversifying the format for publications by investigating the use of a wider range of electronic resources, including the Internet.

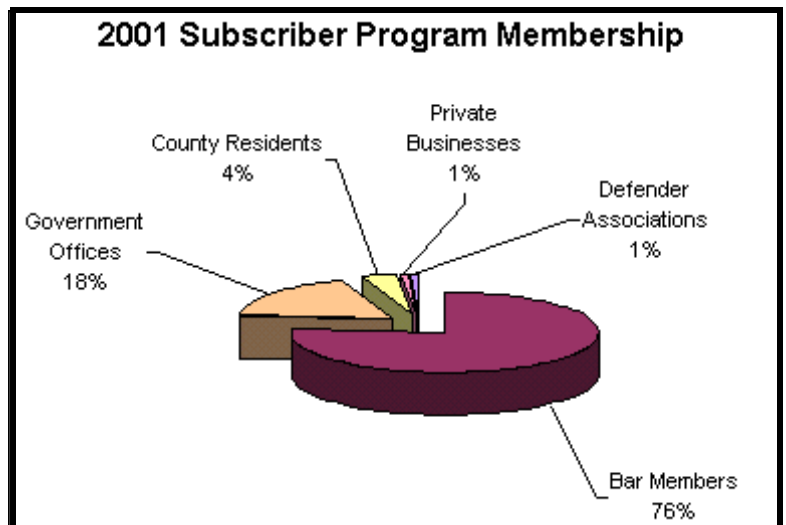
**Collection Review**

In 1997 the Board of Trustees adopted a policy that stated the Library could suspend supplementation for various books in our collection. After three years, any suspended titles would be evaluated and either supplemented, replaced with newer editions, removed from the shelves, or kept on the shelves without further supplementation. In 2001, as in 2000, the librarians examined the titles that met the criteria set forth in the policy, consulted bibliographic authorities and made recommendations for purchase. We spend over \$25,000 updating titles in our collection.

Due to budget constraints, we made some painful cuts to our collection. We discontinued our subscriptions to the second copy of most of the titles of West's regional reporters and cancelled our subscriptions to Shepard's Citations for the regional reporters and federal administrative decisions. Access to the Shepard's Citations is currently maintained through a public access subscription to Lexis.

**Subscriber Program**

The composition of the 2001 Subscriber Program was very similar to its composition in 2000. For the first time since its inception, the fee for annual membership was raised from \$50.00 per individual to \$55.00 per individual. Despite this 10% increase, participation continued to be strong. In total, we had 892 accounts, representing over 7,300 individuals and generating over \$199,000 in revenue. As the chart below demonstrates, the largest groups within the Program were again bar members and government employees.



## FINANCE

The charts and graphs presented below belie the financial complexity of the Library's operations as it has grown from a single site to a multi-site operation. Four general factors contributed to the fiscal shortfall in 2001.

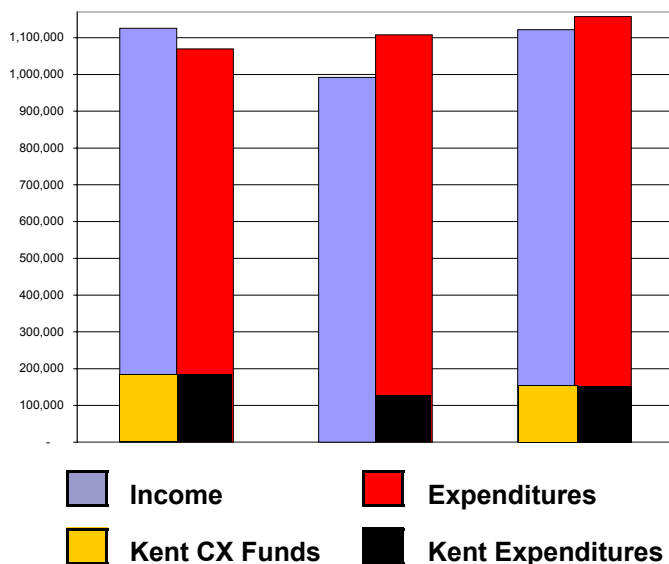
The first of these was the policy determination made by King County to regionalize justice services through the establishment of the Kent Regional Justice Center with courts, prosecutors, judicial administration, police, detention, licensing, and a law library. Since its inception, the absence of a specified source of operating funds for the RJC Law Library has proved to be a challenge. The current state statutory scheme for funding Washington county law libraries does not provide any additional revenues for a county law library system such as the King County Law Library when an additional branch is established.

The second factor was the failure of the State Legislature to act on proposals to provide a more diversified revenue stream for county law libraries. County law libraries have only one funding source specifically dedicated to them: a portion of the civil filing fees paid in District and Superior Court. No additional funding has been provided by the Legislature for libraries that operate from more than one location. The filing fee formula that provides the funding mechanism in RCW 27.24.070 was last revised in 1992. Civil filings throughout the state are flat and have not generated revenues for law libraries at a pace to match inflationary costs of providing public law library service. Locally, these fees have been insufficient for a number of years to fully support even the Seattle Library's operation. Despite strong bipartisan support, efforts taken in the 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002 Legislative sessions to amend the existing filing fee statute to create a local option filing fee surcharge did not succeed.

The third contributing factor was the inflation of the cost of legal materials due to extensive mergers and acquisitions within the legal publishing industry, which began in mid-1996 and continue today. The latest round of cost increases substantially outstrip the general rate of inflation and, more significantly, any ability the Library has to generate funds through overdue book fines, fees and services.

The final contributing factor was the slowing of the economy and the impact of the terrorist events of September 11<sup>th</sup> on the financial underpinnings of the Pacific Northwest. Declining consumer confidence in the market resulted in the lowering of interest rates earned by the Library's reserve fund held in the County's Pooled Interest Fund.

**1999—2001 System Income and Expenditures**



**Budget Category Comparison  
2000 - 2001**

	2000	+/-	2001
<b>Income</b>			
<i>Civil Filing Fees</i>	644,662.20	-1%	639,639.51
<i>Fee Based Services</i>	46,237.55	-5%	44,064.80
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	265,846.22	-6%	251,104.59
<i>CX Funds</i>	-	+100%	150,000.00
<i>Grant Funds</i>	-	+100%	36,934.93
<b>Expenditures</b>			
<i>Books/Periodicals</i>	483,848.14	+5%	507,358.02
<i>Operating</i>	70,080.27	+20%	83,836.93 <small>See Note</small>
<i>Personnel</i>	468,883.52	+4%	489,646.29
<i>Capital</i>	84,683.77	-10%	76,429.40

Note: Increase attributed to costs related to joining the Washington Governmental Entity Insurance Pool.

Finance (continued)

**KING COUNTY LAW LIBRARY  
2001 SYSTEM INCOME AND EXPENDITURES**

<b>SYSTEM INCOME</b>	2001 Budget	2001 Actual	2002 Budget
Civil Filing Fees	625,000.00	639,639.51	610,000.00
Fee-Based Services	44,000.00	44,064.80	44,100.00
Miscellaneous	400,000.00	438,039.52	359,536.00
<b>SYSTEM SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1,069,000.00</b>	<b>1,121,743.83</b>	<b>1,013,636.00</b>
<b>SYSTEM EXPENDITURES</b>	2001 Budget	2001 Actual	2002 Budget
<b>Books and Periodicals</b>			
Seattle	469,600.00	452,871.78	432,100.00
Kent	40,901.00	54,486.24	34,460.00
<b>Operating</b>			
Seattle	90,750.00	66,394.73	77,400.00
Kent	20,881.00	17,442.20	17,885.00
<b>Personnel</b>			
Seattle	454,764.59	425,575.64	474,805.86
Kent	76,218.00	64,070.65	69,691.00
<b>Capital</b>			
Seattle	42,500.00	63,434.35	104,928.00
Kent	12,000.00	12,995.05	5,000.00
<b>SYSTEM SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1,207,614.59</b>	<b>1,157,270.64</b>	<b>1,216,269.86</b>
	2001 Budget	2001 Actual	2002 Budget
<b>Total System Income</b>	1,069,000.00	1,121,743.83	1,013,636.00
<b>Total System Expenditures</b>	1,207,614.59	1,157,270.64	1,216,269.86
<b>System Balance</b>	<b>(138,614.59)</b>	<b>(35,526.81)</b>	<b>(202,633.86)</b>

**Ending Cash Plus Investments**

01/27/2001	497,785.67
01/26/2002	459,605.95

## HIGHLIGHTS

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### Focus Group Activity

The Library Trustees and staff engaged this year in a series of strategic visioning exercises. At the end of the exercises, the Trustees will adopt a master plan to guide the Library for the next four years. The Trustees and staff have investigated methods that will ensure that the Library as an institution continues to position itself as a relevant provider of legal information resources for all segments of the community.

### Library Users Surveyed

In addition to a series of internal reviews, the Library sponsored a series of focus group sessions to solicit information from Library users. A cross section of our community of users participated in the project. The staff created three surveys to gather information. The first survey collected information from members of the general public. The second survey targeted local law librarians. The final survey solicited responses from the Library's attorney patrons at both Seattle and Kent locations.

The Library wanted to learn from its users how their research habits have changed in the past five years. We were also very interested in hearing more from our users about the role KCLL should play in meeting their research needs for the next five years. We wanted to assess the need for existing services and test the waters for the establishment of new services. Through the surveys, the Library gathered information from users about the materials most often used in the Library and from the Library's web site.

### What We Learned

When we received the summary report of the focus group sessions written by law library consultant Linda Falken of Falken Information Services, we were pleased to learn that projects already nearing completion such as the web based public access catalog and automated circulation system appear on the list of suggested changes. While we didn't directly ask participants about their satisfaction with the service they received from library staff, we were delighted that many made a point of praising the staff for their service ethic and expertise. Many attorneys who participated encouraged the library to accelerate the pace of its adoption of technology.

In addition to receiving affirmations about being on the right track, the focus group sessions also provided some surprises. We learned that we need to work much more effectively to communicate with our customers about the services and programs we offer. We've taken to heart a suggestion to create an email-based newsletter for our subscribers. Expect to receive such a publication in the year ahead. We've also made note of suggestions about changes in circulation policies and plan to review existing practices as we implement the new automated circulation system. We value the insight of the participants into their future legal research needs and how the Law Library's collection and services should be designed to meet their requirements. We appreciate the focus group participants' gift of their time.

### Nisqually Earthquake

On February 28, 2001, the Puget Sound area rocked under the impact of an earthquake in excess of 6.0 on the Richter scale. In the days following the February 28<sup>th</sup> earthquake, news coverage highlighted library damage across the Puget Sound area. Library shelving and stack areas proved particularly vulnerable as thousands of volumes tumbled to the floor. Our Seattle and Kent Law Libraries escaped serious damage. Fewer than thirty volumes fell in each library. No library users or staff members received injuries. While the Seattle library remained closed until the courthouse re-opened on March 5<sup>th</sup>, the Kent library opened for business two days later.

In the days immediately after the quake, the staff completed an extensive review of both Libraries. We reported damage and make repair requests to the county facilities management department. The staff completed an operational assessment of our disaster response and participated as a group in a debriefing session offered by the county's employee assistance staff.

Highlights (continued)

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The Library Board and staff members appreciated the numerous calls and offers of assistance we received from Library supporters in our area and from across the country.

In the months ahead, the county will repair and paint the damaged plaster on the walls and support columns in the Seattle Library. Plans were already underway to provide seismic reinforcement for the Seattle courthouse. As a part of the seismic reinforcement project, the Seattle Library will be extensively remodeled.

**Reference E-Mail**

To answer a legal research question, each researcher brings to the process a highly developed set of personal strategies. An individual's strategies may involve the use of a variety of sources. Some may find information as close at hand as their desktop computer and others rely on resources or individuals that are outside their work environment. The resources used to answer questions may be selected as a consequence of law school training, as the result of on the job mentoring, or as the end result of real life trial and error experience.

Regardless of the foundation of their research training, we realize that a growing number of those performing legal research turn to web resources. Following the lead of other law libraries in the area, the Law Library launched a reference email service. We have had our general e-mail account, [kcll@metrokc.gov](mailto:kcll@metrokc.gov), available since the creations of the web site.

**Not Finding What You're Looking For?**

In response to the popularity of staff generated research content on our [www.kcll.org](http://www.kcll.org) web site, we added a new feature to the Library web site. Under the heading "Not Finding What You're Looking For?" the library ventured into the world of virtual reference. This new feature allows users of our web site to fill out a form online and submit their question by simply clicking one button. The reference staff now responds to patron questions by putting our reference skills to work to help patrons in the web environment. We ask users to indicate the county and state of their residence so that we can tailor our response to their specific jurisdiction.

Why are law librarians concerned about researchers' preference of sources? We care because we are looking over the horizon to imagine what our clientele will expect in terms of legal information tools in the future. At our library, we're preparing for the future while balancing a user demographic whose research styles and needs span generations and learning styles. We believe our virtual reference service will become an important resource for legal researchers in King County.

## PATRON OUTREACH

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### Conference Room Reservations

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, the Seattle Library premiered a new service called *Conference Rooms by Reservation*. The Seattle Library's five conference rooms have been available for use on a first come, first served basis. In response to requests from Library users, the Library has created a reservation program for the largest of these conference rooms.

Reservations can be placed in advance for the large conference room. We added a white board to the room to make the room more conducive for use as a setting for group meetings. The library's other conference rooms continue to be available on a no charge, first come, first served basis. Reservations are accepted in hour-long blocks of time. The room rates are \$10.00 an hour for those who belong to the library's Subscriber program and \$15.00 an hour for non-subscribers.

We developed a bulletin board to market this new service and featured the service on the Library's web site. The *Conference Rooms by Reservation* program joined the menu of services that include the document delivery program *KCLL Delivers*, and the public on-line LEXIS Shepardizing and WESTLAW KeyCite services.

### Document Delivery

Document delivery services for the Law Library's subscribers began in the year 2000, but did not start to generate any in major interest until the middle of 2001. The Law Library has gone from filling a request a month to an average of six requests a month. Commonly requested materials include law review articles, state legislative history documents and administrative citations. Document delivery, coined *KCLL Express*, has the potential to become a significant contributor to the system's services for its subscribers.

### Fine Amnesty

In December, the Library began to implement the circulation module of its library automation system project. To encourage the return of long overdue books and to help the staff update user records, the Library offered an amnesty period. During the amnesty period, no fines were assessed if overdue books were returned. If prizes had been awarded for the oldest overdue book returned, the winner would be the individual who returned a copy of *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* checked out in 1968!

### Training at the Seattle Public Library

The Public Services and the Reference Services Librarians taught seven Internet workshops at the Seattle Public Library in February and March, training over eighty library staff members. Seattle Public librarians receive questions about such legal topics as divorce and child custody, landlord-tenant issues, how to bring a small claim, deal with traffic tickets, write wills or power of attorney, and find legal forms on the Internet. Their patrons asked for web-based information and they wanted to be sure they were sending them to the most reliable web-sites to answer their questions. These workshops were instrumental in increasing use of the King County Law Library web site. The Law Library's web site went from an average of 8000 visits a month to over 14,000 visits per month.

Patron Outreach (continued)

**Web Usage**

The Law Library's web site nearly doubled its number of visits after the Seattle Public Library staff workshops in February and March. This higher usage level continued throughout the year. The most popular portions of the web site continue to be the Research Links and the Library Services areas. Library Publications, which are the research guides written by the Law Library staff for patron use, have increased in usage significantly during the year. While the percentage of use changed only slightly, this increase actually translates from approximately 300 visits a month to over 900 visits a month by the end of the year.



## SPECIAL PROJECTS

### **The Law Library Receives a Grant from the *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation***

#### **Grant Application Process**

The residents of King County who turn to the justice system for help face many challenges. Self-represented litigants, especially those of low or moderate means, must overcome barriers linked to information and legal literacy, economic limits, and access to technology and the Internet. In spite of the explosion of available resources on the Internet, gateways to critical justice system information such as court forms and procedural documents remain closed for the low and moderate income citizens who form the largest part of the King County Law Library's patron base. These law library users seldom have access to technology and the Internet from home or from outside the home.

To begin to address the computer and Internet legal research needs of the citizens who use our library, the Library sent a letter of inquiry in August of 2001 to the Community Access to Technology grant program of the *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation*. We asked for a grant of \$36,893.00 to establish a Training Center for Computer and Internet Legal Research with six workstations and an instructor's terminal in our Seattle Library. The Gates Foundation invited the Library to make a formal proposal. In October, we submitted a formal proposal in which we identified nine community partners who would support the Library's efforts should the funding be granted. In early December, the Foundation awarded a CAT grant to the Library in the full amount of our request. Construction of the training center will begin in April of 2002. We expect the center to open four months after construction starts.

#### **Legal Research & Training Center Focus**

The Center's focus will be to facilitate citizen access to electronic and Internet based products and services that will streamline their full participation in court system procedures. The Library realizes that simply providing access to computers, networks, and information will not address the legal research demands of community residents, a population with special needs. Our vision includes a central focus on the need for training and support provided by the Law Library staff in a setting with specialized legal research resources as the critical element for assuring meaningful access to computer based electronic and Internet legal information resources. In addition to training tools and instructional sessions for the citizen researcher, the Center will also provide access to electronic and web resources to assist other segments of our user population including the bar, the courts, and other government officials. The Library will provide the ongoing staff support, the telecommunications connections, the training tools, and the funds needed to remodel the space for the Center.

#### **Goals and Objectives**

The Training Center will accomplish the following goals and objectives:

- Expand the options for meaningful access to computer and Internet based justice system information for county residents of low and moderate means, enabling them to better understand their legal rights and obligations.
- Create an opportunity for a more seamless continuity of process for citizens who come to the courthouse to use court services by providing a center where documents may be prepared using forms and instructions from computer and Internet sources.
- Broaden the range of Library resources by integrating web resources for non-English speaking patrons into the collection to ensure that diverse learning styles may be accommodated.
- Fulfill goals in the Library's strategic and technology plans to enhance the role of the Library's staff as teachers and trainers, to provide a setting for formal and informal learning opportunities geared to the needs of citizen litigants, and to make the resources of the Library's web site available for patrons to use in the Library as well as from remote locations.

Special Projects (continued)

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**Intended Audience and Services**

On average, over 2,000 people use the Seattle branch of our Library each week. Fifty-four percent of reference service interactions involve members of the general public. The numbers of low and moderate-income residents that represent themselves in actions before the courts continues to grow.

In areas such as domestic relations actions, more than sixty percent of the filings have at least one of the parties appearing without legal representation. In Washington, a wide range of entities now provide legal information geared for the needs of the general public on their web sites. Yet, many who search for legal information lack the training and access to Internet technology to benefit from these resources.

Through the Training Center, we will provide instruction and hands-on access to vital resources for those low and moderate income citizens navigating the justice system on their own. The Center will magnify the usefulness of the Library's paper resources for this audience, pairing secondary resources and staff direction with workstations where forms may be completed for filing. The Center will enhance the service already provided by the Library as a referral resource for agencies and departments within the courthouse, as well as for the wider legal service provider community. The Center will serve as a location for the staff to present CLE seminars and other specialized training focused on the needs of attorney users. The Center will provide a model for other public law libraries that are addressing similar population needs and will provide a setting to test the principles of the Access to Justice Board's Technology Bill of Rights project as they are developed.

**Donor and Community Partners**

We're excited about the opportunities this facility will provide and appreciate the support of the *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation* and our community partners:

- Administrative Office of the Courts of the State of Washington
- Columbia Legal Services
- The Information School, University of Washington
- King County Bar Association Board of Trustees
- King County Superior Court Ex Parte and Probate Committee
- Northwest Justice Project
- Communication and Technology Committee of the Washington State Bar Association Access to Justice Board
- Council on Public Legal Education of the Washington State Bar Association Access to Justice Board
- Technology Bill of Rights Project of the Washington State Bar Association Access to Justice Board

**Introducing Continuing Legal Education Courses at the Law Library**

In November and December, the Library sponsored the first of what we expect to be a series of CLE courses. The topic of the initial course was "Legal Ethics on the Web." The one credit course was offered during the lunch hour and has been designed to help the busy practitioner fulfill one hour of their required ethics credits. The course focused on strategies to help attendees make efficient and effective use of free resources available on the web to research ethics questions. Four sessions of the course were held in November and December at the Seattle Library and two were given during the same timeframe at the Kent Library.

The course instructors, law library staff members, demonstrated how to research ethics questions ranging from judicial misconduct to using technology in your practice. Discussion during the session helped attendees determine whether they were looking at the best web site for the information they seek. The instructors illustrated how research on the web can help prevent ethical pitfalls. The course materials now appear on the Library web site. Ethics questions may have changed with the technology, but the need to answer them correctly has not.

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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### Key Reference Skills Training

During May and early June the Law Library staff attended two-day reference training workshops sponsored by the state library. The workshops focused on teaching more effective reference through the use of specific reference behaviors. These behaviors help the staff ensure better reference service to the Law Library's patrons by allowing the staff to verify the patron's question more easily. Once verified, the staff member can then lead the patron to the appropriate source to answer his or her question. As these behaviors require practice, the Law Library continues to emphasize the skills in the staff monthly training. These new skills have helped the staff provide service more quickly and with greater confidence.

### Professional Activities

#### Memberships:

American Association of Law Libraries  
    Private law Libraries - Special Interest Section  
    Research Instruction and Patron Services - Special Interest Section  
    State, Court and County Law Libraries - Special Interest Section  
    Technical Services - Special Interest Section  
Law Librarians of Puget Sound  
Special Libraries Association  
Washington Library Association  
Washington Association of County Law Libraries  
WestPac

#### AALL Committee Work:

AALL Colloquium for Legal Publishers and Law Librarians, Planning committee member  
AALL Workshop, Teaching Legal Research in State, Court and County Law Libraries faculty  
AELIC (Access to Legal Information Committee – 2001)  
Indexing of Legal Periodical Literature Advisory Committee, Chair 2001/2002  
State Court County Special Interest Section, Executive Board  
State Court County Special Interest Section, Bylaws Committee, Chair  
State Court County Special Interest Section, Strategic Planning Committee  
State Court County Special Interest Section, Trustee Development Chair

#### Additional Committee Work:

LLOPS Newsletter Committee  
LLOPS Treasurer  
LLOPS Nominations and Elections Committee  
LLOPS Program Committee  
King County RJC Interdepartmental Workgroup  
King County Seismic Remodel Workgroup  
King County Bar Association Legislative Committee  
Washington State Bar Association, Access to Justice Communication and Technology Committee  
Washington State Bar Association, Public Legal Education Council  
Washington State Bar Association, Technology Bill of Rights Project  
Board of Judicial Administration, Public Trust and Confidence Committee  
Washington State Library, Statewide Virtual Reference Services Steering Committee



# New Services For a New Century

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## Staff Development (continued)

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### **Program Presentations:**

Seattle Public Library Workshop

King County Bar Association Lunchbreak discussions

Continuing Legal Education class: "Legal Ethics on the Web"

"Using the Washington State Legislative Web Page"

University of Washington Law Librarianship Program: "Technical Services in a County Law Library"

AALL Workshop on Teaching Legal Research in State, Court and County Law Libraries:

"Addressing Legal Research Needs: Creating the Learning Environment"

### **Attendance at:**

American Associations of Law Libraries Annual Meeting

TRICALL (Teaching Research in Court and Agency Law Libraries)

CONELL (Conference of Newer Law Librarians)

Model Reference Behaviors Workshop

LLOPS Spring Workshop

Administering SQL Server 2000

Administering Windows 2000 Server

Implementing TCP/IP in Windows Networks

Crystal Reports training

FrontPage 2000 training

Washington Library Association Annual Meeting

OCLC Training

OCLC Update

AALL Colloquium for Legal Publishers and Law Librarians

Membership Subscription Law Libraries Roundtable

### **Publications in:**

*King County Bar Bulletin*

*LlopsCited*

*AALL Spectrum*

*SCCLL Newsletter*

*Legal Information Alert*

*Full Court Press*

*Law Library Journal*

### **Other:**

Renton Technical College Legal Secretary/Legal Assistant Advisory Committee

West Group Excellence in Scholarship Advisory Committee

King County Pro Se Family Law Workgroup

## LOOKING AHEAD...

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Each year the Trustees and library staff review Law Library operations. We identify and prioritize the projects to be addressed in the year ahead. Attention focuses on developing strategies for implementation and timelines for completion. In addition, we focus on identifying the projects and decision making that will be needed to in the year ahead to strengthen the ties between the Library and its users. We highlighted the following:

- Strengthen lines of communication with core library user populations.
- Support in the development of a state wide legislative agenda to secure more diverse and stable funding sources for county law libraries.
- Create a legal research training center geared to the research needs of the general public.
- Join in statewide efforts to develop collaborative virtual reference services.
- Seek grant funding opportunities to support technology enhancements.
- Mitigate the impact of consolidation in the legal publishing industry on our collection costs.
- Diversify offerings of on-line research tools for patrons to take advantage of changes in legal publishing.
- Develop new services and programs to enhance the Library's ability to serve the needs of its patrons.
- Expand the role of the Library staff as trainers for the Library's patrons including the development of CLE seminars.
- Participate in the planning for the courthouse seismic renovation.
- Identify strategies to ensure that the Library will continue to be relevant to those who search for legal information resources in the digital age.
- Maintain ties with the statewide Access to Justice Community.
- Expand the number of subject specific collection guides to assist patron research that we published on the KCLL Web site.
- Initiate projects which focus on facilitating access to legal information .

A comparison of this summary with the critical issues statements created in prior years shows many topics making a repeat appearance. Funding, space planning, collection management, and planning for technology will be challenges for many years to come. With the continued support of our users, the Library expects to continue to act in a forceful manner to address these topics.