

Minnesota State Law Library

Annual Report 2006

Administration

Services: Use of library services increased in all categories. In addition to participating in Judicial Branch orientations, the Minnesota State Law Library (MSLL) emails a brief PowerPoint introduction concerning library services to each new judicial employee; 356 email introductions were sent in 2006. Library staff met with seven Judicial Branch departments to promote and improve library services to their personnel. Judicial employees appreciate services delivered directly to their computer desktops, which MSLL has expanded significantly in recent years. The Library supports the strategic goals of the Judicial Branch, particularly in the areas of public education and services to self-represented litigants, as evidenced by the fact that the general public makes up 45% of our patron base. To this end, the State Law Librarian served on the Statewide Law Library/Self-Help Center Project Advisory Workgroup. This activity is highlighted in the Public and Electronic Services report.

Collections: After years of self-insurance, the administrative staff of the Minnesota Judicial Center signed a building content insurance contract this year. After researching various methods for valuing library materials, it was decided to insure the MSLL collection at \$4,843,482.

As part of our materials preservation efforts, the Library added four important historical sources to the [Minnesota Digital Library](#). Now available to scholars world-wide are the two separate debates and proceedings of the Minnesota Constitutional Convention, by the Republican and Democratic delegations; the first Rules of Court, handwritten in 1849; and the 1894 *Index Digest to All the Laws of Minnesota*, by John F. Kelly, the first comprehensive index to Minnesota state laws.

The [Collection Development Plan](#) was extensively revised during 2006 and posted online in January 2007.

Special Events: The Library's Spring and Fall Showcases included *Meet the Judges* (Supreme Court Justice Gildea and Court of Appeals Judge Worke), *Meet the Staff* (John Kostouros), two authors, the Executive Director of the ACLU-MN discussing censorship and banned books, and a special screening of *The Lost Boys of Sudan*.

The Library hosted a reception for legislators to celebrate the [MnLINK Gateway](#), which was held as part of Library Legislative Day on March 30, 2006. In April, during National Library Week, MSLL coordinated a book drive on behalf of the New Orleans Public Library system; 616 titles (18 boxes of books) were collected and sent to the New Orleans to help rebuild their collections after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. The State Law Library celebrated Banned Books Week from September 24-October 2 with a drawing for *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *Of Mice and Men*, two infamous banned books. From across the state, 347 judicial employees entered the drawing.



Art produced by Stillwater Correctional Facility prisoners was exhibited in the Library during June. Minnesota Court of Appeals Judge Randall donated Darrell Armstrong's painting "Starting the Day" to the Library; the dedication was held on October 19, 2006.

Juvenile Court at 100: The Minnesota Juvenile Court Centenary Planning Committee completed its work with a report to the Supreme Court on October 12, 2006. MSLL created a [webpage](#), where the report is posted and other activities and accomplishments of the Committee are described. The final project of the Committee was a storyboard exhibit highlighting

the history of the juvenile court. The exhibit is available for display in courthouses, libraries, schools, and historical societies around the state.

Library Leadership: State Law Librarian Barbara Golden completed her term as Chair of the State Court and County Law Libraries Special Interest Section of the American Association of Law Libraries by presiding over the annual meeting in St. Louis. She remains on the Board as Past-Chair. The State Law Librarian was also part of the state delegation to the Midwest Regional Conference on *Pro Se* Litigation, held in Des Moines on September 7-9, 2006, and sponsored by the American Judicature Society. Individual state teams worked on action plans and Ms. Golden presented the Minnesota report at the closing session. Minnesota discussions focused on the judicial strategic objective to provide baseline self-help services throughout the state by using the judicial website and a call center.

Randi Madisen, Head of Public and Electronic Services, worked on the committee that organized and designed the new Judicial Branch website <http://www.mncourts.gov>. Daniel Lunde, Head of Outreach Services, completed his term as chair of [CALCO](#) (Capitol Area Library Consortium) and continues to serve on the Minnesota State Library Advisory Council. Robin Horowitz, Technical Services Librarian, serves on the MnLINK Indexing Task Force.

Law Library Service to Prisoners/ Outreach Services

2006 Index

8,900 DOC prisoners (as of December 31, 2006)

82 prison visits

7,042 miles traveled to prisons

1,155 inmate interviews

1,672 individual inmates assisted

25,582 items delivered to inmates

728 hours worked by interns and volunteers

Services: The mission of [Law Library Services to Prisoners Program](#) is to provide law library service to inmates incarcerated in Minnesota. The Program does this by providing access to legal materials, both at the correctional facilities and the Minnesota State Law Library. Circuit-riding prison law librarians, based at MSLL, conduct monthly visits to eight adult correctional facilities to meet with inmates. Questions that cannot be answered on-site using the prison collections of core legal materials are researched at MSLL. Inmates also write or call LLSP for assistance with their legal research. Law library services are also provided to Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) inmates housed in other facilities, such as county jails, state hospitals, and other states. In addition, LLSP provides law library service to DOC staff.

Collections: The Department of Corrections is striving to make inmate legal research services and materials as consistent and uniform as possible in all the correctional facilities. Throughout 2006, the staff of LLSP worked closely with DOC staff to implement this new goal. LLSP staff drafted a new condensed core print collection list to be used in conjunction with a new increased collection of CD-ROM materials that became available at most of the major correctional facilities (only four of the eight major prisons had CD-ROM materials in the past). This combination of print and electronic resources gives the inmate access to primary legal materials at the institution. The Head of Outreach Services, Daniel Lunde, and each of the LLSP librarians visited each prison during 2006 and discussed issues and concerns with the institution librarians. LLSP staff also met with the prison librarians at their biannual meetings in Stillwater and Red Wing to discuss the proposed changes in services to inmates. LLSP staff worked closely with DOC librarians and education staff to make the transition to the CD-ROM product as seamless as possible.

Staff, Interns, and Volunteers: Joan O., a LLSP volunteer for more than eleven years, provided many hours of quality service, retrieving and copying legal materials for inmates. Three College of St. Catherine's Library School Masters Degree students interned with LLSP this year. Each intern processed and researched inmate requests, using the skills and concepts learned in the classroom and applying them to actual questions. LLSP was also assisted by a STEP-UP intern during the summer of 2006. Our interns and volunteers worked 728 hours in 2006 (not including the work done by the STEP-UP intern) - and their assistance was invaluable. One of the reasons LLSP accomplished so much was due to our high-level interns and volunteers.

The primary reason for our success, however, is due to the dedication and hard work of the program staff: Stephanie Thorson, Susan Trombley, Shari Ober and Deb Kitze. Shari began working for LLSP at the beginning of July. It was a difficult year, with an extended period without one of the full-time librarians, but LLSP accomplished all of its goals.

Statistical Highlights: LLSP compiles many statistics. A few observations concerning service to inmates in Minnesota Correctional Facilities in 2006 follow:

- Stillwater, the state's largest close-security institution for adult male felons with a population over 1300, and Oak Park Heights, Minnesota's maximum-security institution with a population of 430, received the largest numbers of items delivered (6005 and 5782 respectively).
- Oak Park Heights and Stillwater also had the largest number of individuals assisted in proportion to the total inmate population (79% and 31% respectively).
- Rush City was the institution with the largest increase in requests (9.3% over last year). Faribault and Lino Lakes also had more requests in 2006.
- There was a 59% increase in requests from MN DOC inmates serving time in those institutions LLSP does not visit.
- Rush City and Stillwater had the largest number of on-site meetings with inmates (248 and 202 respectively).

For a complete statistics, in addition to comparative tables, charts and graphs, see the [Law Library Service To Prisoners 2006 Annual Report](#).

Public and Electronic Services

2006 Index

862 email reference questions answered
339 items scanned and emailed
210 letters from jail inmates
Over 2,200 items circulated
20,426 Library webpages
12,445 website search queries per month
27,424 visits to website per month
13,897 unique visitors to website per month
38,532 online Library catalog searches per month

Public Services: Public and Electronic Services are all about library users. Usage statistics of every variety increased in 2006. As a public law library, Minnesota citizens continue to be our largest patron category at 45%. Participation in Judicial Branch orientations continued, with Anna Cherry and Susan Larson, both Public Service Librarians, alternating as presenters. Orientation participants are brought down to the Library, and a tour is offered, if time allows. Public Services staff gave tours to 17 groups in 2006, ranging from paralegal training programs to library orientations for new appellate court law clerks. Tours were provided to over 460 individuals. Interlibrary loan of materials increased; 122 items were borrowed for Judicial Branch patrons, while 176 items were loaned to other libraries.

Electronic Services: More and more of our State Law Library services are delivered via the Internet, email and phone. Our electronic newsletter, [Briefly...News from Your State Law Library](#), was, and continues to be, sent monthly to all Minnesota judicial staff to alert them to new online and print resources. Many court employees commented on a specific issue of *Briefly...* that highlighted our NetLibrary collection, which includes 5,800 electronic books. One district court administrator stated, "From time to time, I use MnLINK to request books that my county library does not have. The NetLibrary is much better in that it allows me to look at books anytime, without even having to pick them up."

The State Law Library [website](#) serves the judiciary and the public by providing 24/7 access to court information, such as the archive of [Minnesota appellate court opinions](#). In 2006, the Library revamped several items in our "[Docket Series](#)," which provides assistance in researching specific topics in the Library. New in 2006 were *Starting and Managing a Law Practice* and *Judicial Outreach*. Additions were also made to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQ) webpage, with answers to many common "Ask a Law Librarian" email reference questions.

The Library subscribes to several online services that serve any of our patrons within the Library, including court staff. LexisNexis was used more than 650 hours in 2006. Westlaw usage is measured differently, in transactions and hours; there were 4054 transactions, during 274 hours of usage, in 2006. The Library also added online access to CCH's employment, labor, and human resources databases. Through the [Electronic Library for Minnesota](#) (ELM), anyone in the Minnesota Judicial Center can access databases that provide indexing and full text of academic journals and popular magazines. Use of these resources increased significantly in 2006, more than doubling in some cases. H.W. Wilson's *Index to Legal Periodicals* was searched 1107 times, a 28% increase from the previous year. *Index to Legal Periodicals Retro*, with coverage from 1918 to 1981, was searched 842 times, a 78% increase. Last, but not least, HeinOnline allows patrons in the Judicial Center access to full text legal periodical and law review articles; it averaged 25 visits per month, a 31% increase from 2005.

Wireless access to the Internet arrived in MSLL during March. Patrons use it daily and have few technical problems.

County Law Library Program: One of the ongoing missions of the [County Law Library Program](#) (CLLP) is to support *pro se* litigants in locating legal information. This has traditionally been achieved through the collection and dissemination of *pro se* materials and services at local county law libraries. However, there has been no uniformity of these resources and services, due in large part to the availability of funding and staffing at individual libraries. In an effort to resolve these problems, CLLP staff and the State Law Librarian worked throughout the year with the Statewide Law Library/Self-Help Center Project Advisory Workgroup. The Final Report is now available online at <http://www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/StatewideLLReport.pdf>.

Space planning was the purpose of site visits to Scott, Carver and Steele county law libraries by CLLP and the State Law Librarian in 2006.

Technical Services

2006 Index

\$161.50 cost of a *North Western Reporter* volume.
53% cost increase since 2004
58.69% increase in gasoline prices since 2004
6610 print items added to Library collection
14,574 pieces of microfiche added
1,723 briefs processed
1,794 transcripts processed
143 electronic records added to the online catalog
9,919 federal government depository documents added
26,867 online catalog edits

Services: Technical Services does the important day-to-day work of ordering and processing new materials for the Library collection, filing loose-leafs, adding opinions to the online archive, processing and binding Minnesota appellate court briefs, adding electronic documents and publications to the collection, cataloging websites, and preserving our valuable resources. All of these processes require money, time, expertise, and dedication - in order to make MSLL a vital, essential legal resource for the Judicial Branch and the citizens of Minnesota. One employee of the Technical Services staff was gone on a medical leave for most of the year, yet the hard-working and dedicated staff achieved all essential departmental functions.

Cataloging: Technical Services cataloged and processed 6610 new items for the Library collection during 2006. The Library's [online catalog](#) was upgraded; it migrated from Aleph version 15.5 to 17. As with all catalog system updates, there was some pain, but the Library experienced very few glitches in service. However, migrating from one online version to another is always problematic; it requires learning new and different processes and changing workflow.

Government Documents: The Library participates in the Government Printing Office (GPO) [Federal Depository Library Program](#). In fact, MSLL is one of the oldest depositories in the state. Last year, 8164 individual microfiche were added to the collection, including many electronic links to the documents. The number of government publications available in paper format has declined significantly in the past few years, due to the widespread use of the Internet by federal agencies publishing government documents. Some important acquisitions during 2006 are various reports on the Hurricane Katrina disaster and the Iraq Study Group. The total number of paper documents added to the collection was 1704. The Library also continues to see a decline in the documents distributed to the Capitol Area Libraries in Consortium (CALCO). Seventy-six items from the federal government

depository system were distributed to nine Minnesota state government agency libraries. This decline is due to the factors mentioned above.

County Law Library Collections: The County Law Library Program provides assistance and support to many county law libraries throughout Minnesota. Among MSL's many services to the county law libraries are providing them with free bound copies of primary Minnesota legal materials, such as statutes, session laws, agency regulations, and the *Minnesota Legislative Manual* (also known as the *Blue Book*), as well as guiding them in organizing their collections. For some county law libraries, the State Law Library catalogs their materials for a modest fee. The county law library cataloged materials become a part of MSL's online catalog, and users throughout the state can determine what materials are available in their local county law libraries. Last year, 1298 items were cataloged for county law libraries throughout Minnesota.



End of year fun. The State Law Library's entry in the Judicial Center's Holiday Snowman Contest.