

LLNE News

Newsletter of the Law Librarians of New England
Volume 22, Number 1, 2002

NELLCO and Virtual Reference

by Tracy L. Thompson, Executive Director
New England Law Library Consortium
(NELLCO)

Electronic reference, digital reference, live reference, remote reference, synchronous reference, chat reference; all of these terms are used to refer to reference service provided in an online environment in real time. The term *virtual reference* seems to have won out, so I will use it here for simplicity's sake. But in using this term, let me first clarify that I prefer the definition of virtual, when applied to this technology, that is set forth in the online edition of the OED (<http://www.oed.com>) under **virtual**, *a.* (and *n.*)1.a. *Possessed of certain physical virtues or capacities; effective in respect of inherent natural qualities or powers; capable of exerting influence by means of such qualities.* I realize the definition originally intended is more akin to 4.g. *Computers. Not physically existing as such but made by software to appear to do so from the point of view of the program or the user.* The former definition, if we must use the term virtual, more accurately describes the kind of service that we hope to provide!

Last summer, when Diane Klaiber was passing the NELLCO torch, she and I had a discussion about the role of virtual reference within the consortium. At that time, although I was very interested in this vehicle for the provision of reference service, the concept seemed still in its infancy and the idea of a NELLCO initiative was something to keep in the back of my mind. As I began to speak with librarians and library directors however, it became clear that there was interest in and need for the technology

now. As I dug deeper I realized that this is a technology whose time has come, and many libraries have already made exciting and successful forays into the world of virtual reference. I learned a great deal about the current state of the art by attending the 3rd Annual Virtual Reference Desk Conference in Orlando last November. I would recommend this conference to anyone considering a virtual reference service. The next VRD conference is slated for Nov. 11-12, 2002 in Chicago. For more information about the conference see <http://www.vrd.org>.

Virtual reference solutions cover a broad spectrum. Simple text-based chat software, such as Rakim, is freely available in a beta version at <http://styro.lib.muohio.edu/rakim/> and may provide a perfectly acceptable solution. At the VRD conference a special library had selected this type of simple solution primarily as a means to enhance access to their print collection for their narrow, on-site user base. They and their users were thrilled with the results. Bringing up the middle are solutions like Live Assistance (<http://www.liveassistance.com/>), which comes with a price tag and includes text-based chat and page pushing but does not yet employ co-browsing. At the other end of the picture are higher-priced, high-functioning solutions like Convey Systems (<http://www.conveysystems.com>), LSSI (<http://www.lssi.com>) and 24/7 (<http://www.247ref.org>). Each of these high-end solutions has its strengths and weaknesses. All of them combine text-based chat with page pushing and co-browsing features, which allow reference librarians to steer their online patrons' computers. Convey Systems

even employs video and voice over IP (voIP), but also requires a one-time client-side download that many librarians feel would be a real deterrent for patrons at this stage of development of the technology. All of these solutions, including the freeware, include transcripts of every reference session saved in an archive and copied to the patron for later reference. Some of these solutions have very versatile reporting applications that will allow a provider of the service to really mine their statistics. All of this development is happening very quickly, and the early implementers really have a hand in directing its growth.

Why should law libraries consider this approach to reference? Well, it's no secret that our users are not visiting our physical space in the numbers we once saw.¹ Instead, our users are often 'remote'. 'Remote user' is another term I use with some hesitancy, and I concur completely with Ann Lipow of Library Solutions Institute and Press who said in a keynote address in 1999, "rather than thinking of our users as remote, we should instead recognise that it is ***we who are remote from our users.*** We need to ***change how we do business*** in such a way as to get us back together."² (Emphasis added) Our patrons are becoming accustomed to working in a physical space of their own choosing and on their own time, whether it's the local coffee shop at 5:00 a.m., their dorm room at midnight, or their office or home between other tasks. They are becoming accustomed to portable access to the resources they need. The library may seem restrictive and confining to patrons today, and to an even greater extent to our patrons of tomorrow.

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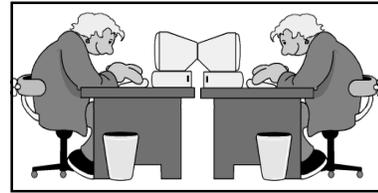
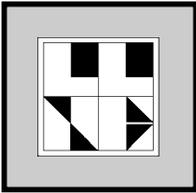
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The Law Librarians of New England (LLNE) is a chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries. *LLNE News*, the chapter newsletter, is published quarterly as Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter issues and is provided to active members as a part of their membership dues. LLNE does not assume any responsibility for the statements advanced by the contributors to *LLNE News* nor do the views expressed necessarily represent the views of LLNE or its members. Those not eligible for active membership in LLNE may subscribe to *LLNE News* by becoming an Associate Member. A check for \$10.00 (per year) should be sent to Cynthia Landau, Assistant Law Librarian and Professor of Law, Franklin Pierce Law Center, 2 White Street, Concord, NH 03301. The check should be payable to the Law Librarians of New England. Any other questions concerning *LLNE News* including requests for reprints should be directed to:

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DEADLINES FOR VOLUME 22

No. 2 - May 15, 2002
No. 3 - August 1, 2002
No. 4 - December 1, 2002

CO-EDITORS' NOTE

We hope you take the time to browse through this issue and read the various items contributed by all of you. NELLCO Executive Director Tracy Thompon has written an article about the new NELLCO Virtual Reference Task Force. We are also excited to present the results from our recent survey of the readership's interest in an electronic version of the newsletter. Thank you all for your responses!

This is the first issue we have produced without Maria, and her presence was most definitely missed. We could not have done it without her organized files and her consultation. We want to thank Maria for her years of dedication and service. She will be sorely missed.

Anyone interested in submitting items for future issues should contact John Pedini (jpedini@sociallaw.com) or Michelle Pearse (m.pearse@neu.edu).

We look forward to seeing all of at the Spring Meeting at Franklin Pierce!

Co-Editors, LLNE News

**Special thanks to Carole
Doody of Social Law Library
for her assistance with this
issue!**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I write, we are having another warm week in February. This has been a highly unusual winter for temperature and precipitation. I continue to wonder if the big snow storm is just around the corner! Our spring meeting IS practically just around the corner. I am looking forward to traveling north in April to New Hampshire to visit the Franklin Pierce Law Center to learn about Education Law. Judy Gire and her staff are

gearing up for what should be a great day. Sally Holterhoff will be our visitor from the AALL Executive Board. She has already sent me and Judy her greetings and she looks forward to meeting all of you and hearing from you about how AALL can meet your needs.

In late January, I met with the Executive Board for a day of strategic planning. Susan Sullivan from Boston College Law Library kindly hosted our group and Maureen Sullivan was our facilitator. We had a very fruitful day and you will be hearing more from us about those discussions in the future.

As my year as President has now passed the halfway mark, I have appointed a Nominating Committee to provide the membership with a slate of officers for 2002-2003. Anne Acton, New England School of Law, has agreed to chair the Committee. Joining her are Karen Moss, U.S. Court of Appeals, 1st Circuit and Nan Balliot, Roger Williams University School of Law. I am grateful to them for assisting us in finding new leadership for LLNE.

Maria Sekula called me this week to inform me that she can no longer continue her work on the LLNE Newsletter. We are all grateful for all the time and energy she has given to help make that publication as successful as it has been – thanks, Maria!

An early reminder to all of you that we will once again have a joint LLNE/SNELLA luncheon at the AALL annual meeting in Orlando, Florida. It will be on Tuesday, July 23. I hope that those of you who go to Florida will join us for lunch. It is always a nice way to guarantee seeing New England friends at the annual meeting.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a pleasant spring season and I look forward to seeing many of you in New Hampshire at our spring meeting!

Darcy Kirk

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Calendar of LLNE Meetings

Spring 2002

Education Law: Franklin Pierce
Law Center Library
Concord, NH
April 26, 2002

Fall 2002

Northeastern University School of Law,
Boston, MA

Spring 2003

Suffolk University Law School, Boston,
MA

Fall 2004

Social Law Library, Boston, MA

Join LLNE/SNELLA in Orlando

The LLNE/SNELLA Joint Chapter Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, July 23, 2002 from noon-1:30pm at the Peabody Hotel in Orlando, Florida. The registration form appears on page 15 of this issue of the newsletter and on the LLNE website.

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However, the need for reference assistance still exists, and may in fact be magnified as our patrons struggle to navigate the growing corpus of electronic resources available to them. How can we effectively "get us back together"? The answer seems obvious. We must go to them. Virtual reference can get us there.

After a meeting with the NELLCO Directors and a subsequent meeting with the NELLCO Reference Liaisons last fall, NELLCO decided to test the waters. A Virtual Reference Task Force was established to investigate the idea of an online, collaborative legal reference service and develop a pilot project. The Task Force is composed of 10 volunteers, each representing a different NELLCO institution. The Task Force has made some progress. At a meeting held several weeks ago at the Connecticut Judicial Branch Library in Middletown, CT we arrived at some decisions about the pilot. First, we hope to have our software in place by mid-summer so that we will have an opportunity to train staff and practice our skills on a limited basis. The full-scale pilot would then be rolled out to our patrons in order to coincide with the start of the academic year. The pilot would run for one full academic year and we would evaluate the service in the spring of 2003. We expect to employ a system architecture for the pilot that would see the vendor acting as an application service provider, with our service housed on their centralized server. This would minimize the IT involvement for participating NELLCO members and maximize the ease of access for those librarians staffing the service. We plan to staff two 'seats' on the service; at any time our service is operational two librarians can be on duty and serving patrons at the same time.

The Task Force has seen a number of software solutions to consider. One of our members, Scott Matheson at Yale, put together a Rakim-based chat solution for the group to evaluate. A representative from 24/7 Reference attended our Reference meeting last fall and demonstrated their software. At a meeting of the Task Force a few weeks ago I demonstrated Live Assistance to the group. After discussion about what we expect our needs to be in

this new environment we chose a solution that we think will be the best for our pilot. I am working to negotiate some favorable pricing for our limited pilot project so I won't reveal our choice at this time.

We don't yet know which NELLCO members will opt to take part in the pilot, but it will be open for participation to the entire membership. Many of the decisions that the Task Force needs to make are chicken-and-egg choices. For example, we don't know what sort of staffing commitment we will need from participating libraries until we see how many participants we will have, but members may not want to commit to participation until they know what the staffing commitment will be. We are working to solve these riddles.

As with the provision of any new service, there are obstacles. In a collaborative environment there may be more obstacles, since individual missions vary. Our obstacles include issues surrounding hours, staffing, service policies and guidelines. We are all anxious to overcome these stumbling blocks and provide a viable service for our users. I think we can succeed. We need to focus on the service that we hope to provide collaboratively, rather than the ways in which we are diverse independently. We need to capitalize on the fact that we are all law librarians and we share a level of expertise. We need to recognize the good fortune we enjoy in having a patron base with a generally high level of computer literacy; a group well suited for this endeavor. We need to compromise and move forward. I think our patrons will be pleasantly surprised to find us in cyberspace!

(Footnotes)

¹ See, for example, Suzanne Thorpe, "Trends in Law Library Public Services: Have You Seen Your Patrons Lately?" *AALL Spectrum*, 6 (Feb. 2002): 6.

² Ann Lipow provided the keynote address at Information Online & On Disc 99: The Ninth Australasian Conference and Exhibition. For the full text of her comments please see <http://www.csu.edu.au/special/online99/proceedings99/200.htm>

Some Web Resources for Virtual Reference

D-Lib Forum and D-Lib Magazine, <http://www.dlib.org/>

Live Reference (list of resources), <http://www-sul.stanford.edu/staff/infocenter/liveref.html>

The Teaching Librarian (Digital Reference), <http://pages.prodigy.net/tab01/digref.htm>

Virtual Reference, <http://www.ilsa.lib.ia.us/virtualref.htm>

Virtual Reference Desk, Digital Reference Resources, http://www.vrd.org/pubinfo/proceedings99_bib.shtml

Web-Based Reference Services (Resources), <http://www.multcolib.org/products/digref/resources.html>

Examples of Virtual Reference Projects

See generally Liv-REF, A Registry of All Real-Time Digital Reference Services, <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~CYBERSTACKS/LiveRef.htm>

Collaborative Digital Reference, <http://www.loc.gov/rr/digiref/>

Implementing Real-Time Reference, The UCLA Project (power point slides available), <http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/college/digref/VRD2001.pdf>

Interactive Reference Project (Temple University), <http://www.library.temple.edu/ref/interactref.html>

Report on R4R Project, <http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/~b-sloan/r4r.final.htm>

24/7 Reference, <http://www.247ref.org/> (Boston Public Library part of project, <http://www.247ref.org/portal/access3.cfm?lib=bostonpublic>)

Boston Library Consortium Offers Workshop on Virtual Reference

By Joan Shear, Boston College Library and Michelle Pearse, Northeastern University Law School Library

On December 5, 2001, the Boston Library Consortium offered a workshop on virtual reference. A number of speakers touched on the topic of the evolution of the need for virtual reference service. While patrons are going to the web for their research questions, they are increasingly frustrated, either finding too much information with too little quality cues to be meaningful, or not finding the specific information they really want. They then want help where they got stuck, which is on the web. We, as librarians, need to find the patrons where they do their research, and that means we need to find them, or rather have them find us, on the web.

Speakers from a variety of libraries shared their experiences. Issues discussed included planning for, staffing, marketing and evaluating virtual reference service. All the librarians who presented were very enthusiastic about this service. They also cautioned that some people are not, and that this type of interaction does not come naturally, and librarians need extensive training to be able to provide virtual reference service. Workshop attendees were also able to view demonstrations of various software products that could be used for a virtual reference project.

Kathe Collins of the Illinois State University Library in Normal, Illinois discussed the Ready for Reference ("R4R") Project where eight Illinois academic libraries have partnered to provide digital reference service to patrons. Library Systems and Services, Inc. (LSSI) supplies the software for the project and provides back up after hours and during times of peak use. Project liaisons coordinate activities with their respective libraries. Priority for the service is extended to those affiliated with the 8 institutions, then to those at other libraries in their Alliance System, followed by Illinois and non-Illinois residents as possible. In evaluating the system, they found that weekdays were busiest and that April was the busiest month, with the

median question lasting a little over 13 minutes. She found that the key ingredients seem to be stable software, ongoing training and 2-3 hours per library per week. See <http://www.alliancelibrarysystem.com/ready> for more information. The final report on the R4R project is available at <http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/~b-sloan/r4r.final.htm> and includes a log of questions of actual questions posed by users during the busiest two-week period of the pilot project.

A panel discussion moderated by Steve Coffman followed. Steve mentioned that the cost of the software varies greatly. He mentioned free options such as AOL Instant Messenger, as well as a lower-priced option called "Live Person." He discussed how some software allows one to take patrons through databases to show a search, but remarked on the problems that might arise with authenticating patrons.

Jana Smith Ronan of the University of Florida's Reference Express (<http://refexpress.uflib.ufl.edu>) then discussed staffing issues that arise in providing such services. Issues include personnel, what hours to provide, training, scheduling and communication. She suggested consulting e-mail usage, website or database usage and staff availability when determining what hours to provide. She also suggested the possibility of outsourcing during unpopular hours. For scheduling, she suggested setting a semester schedule with librarians being responsible for replacements, while avoiding scheduling chat sessions back to back with reference desk hours. Sixty-three percent of their users learned about the service through their website. Librarians are able to work from home when providing the service and lack of resources for such an arrangement has not been an issue.

Sarah Wenzel of MIT then discussed publicity and marketing. She stressed the need for marketing digital reference service with other refer-

ence services and the entire library. She stressed the important of service quality, returning customers and word of mouth, with the good customer service being internal marketing. She stressed the need to "think" marketing (marketing audits, e-mail stats and expanding publicity), managing technology and evaluating services.

The Boston Public Library's Marta Pardee-King then discussed the library's participation in "24/7 Reference" and demonstrated how the software they use works. For more information about this project, see <http://www.247ref.org/> for general information about the project.

Jane Stewart of the University of Massachusetts-Boston wrapped up, remarking on the need to share our common resources and to show the library as a useful institution.

EDUCATION LAW IS THE FOCUS FOR THE SPRING, 2002 LLNE MEETING

by Cynthia Landau, Assistant Law Librarian and Professor of Law, Franklin Pierce Law Center

We hear about education law issues in the news every day. Sometimes we hear about an issue the U.S. Supreme Court is deciding, such as whether the use of vouchers to fund parochial schools is a violation of the separation of church and state; sometimes we hear about a state or local issue regarding equality of education and how it will be funded (our favorite topic of discussion in New Hampshire!) Usually it is controversial. Is it sexual harassment when a six year old kindergartener kisses his female classmate? How can the federal government mandate schools to furnish special education programs without providing funding? How can we work to prevent school violence? What legal rights does your school child have against bullying? Is the school liable for injuries? What kind of first amendment and privacy rights do

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school children have? What about the digital school environment? Is it OK for school and public libraries to install filtering software to block explicit Internet sites from their young patrons? How has the Children's Internet Protection Act changed the scene? What about the increasing use of distance learning by universities? How does distance learning work? What copyright and ownership issues does this new method of delivering education raise?

Franklin Pierce Law Center is hosting the Spring, 2002 LLNE Meeting, and our program focus is education law. The meeting, which will be held on Friday, April 26th at the Law Center in Concord, New Hampshire, is called "Slicing the Apple: Current Topics in Education Law". (Also, in conjunction with the LLNE meeting, a NELLCO directors' meeting will be held at Pierce Law starting at 10:00 AM on Thursday, April 25th). Our LLNE programing goal is to sensitize attendees to a wide variety of issues, and to highlight trends and hot topics in the field of education law. We will have two perspectives programs to provide overviews; then we have two more programs providing more depth in the most rapidly changing areas of education law: educational funding, and education issues within the digital environment.

We will first hear from Professor Sarah Redfield, who teaches several education law courses at Franklin Pierce Law Center. Professor Redfield has been our pioneer in developing courses in the distance education medium. She has also, for the past ten years, planned and held a major annual conference, the Education Law Institute, offering programs which have given broad coverage to many current

issues within education law. In her presentation to LLNE she will provide an overview of the field entitled "Supremes in the Schoolhouse", discussing recent U.S. Supreme Court activity related to education and will provide her perspective as an educator and conference organizer. Then we will hear from Mr. Theodore Comstock, Esq., who has had a career as an attorney for the N.H. School Board Association. He will provide another perspective by describing his work within the school administrative structure, focusing especially on labor and employment issues.

The more in-depth programs are focused on two areas where there has been much recent legal activity around the country and represent major areas of change in the field of education law. One of the in-depth programs is entitled "Education Funding Litigation: New Hampshire and Across the Nation" and will cover issues around the educational funding and education equity debate. We have two presenters who have been on the forefront of this movement. Mr. Andru Volinsky, Esq., a private practitioner, and Ms. Anne Edwards, Esq., from the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office, have been the lead attorneys involved on opposing sides of this issue in the *Claremont* cases, where New Hampshire's battle on education funding is still being fought. The speakers will discuss this movement not only from the New Hampshire perspective, but will also provide an overview of its status in other states around the country.

Our final in-depth program focuses on education law in the digital environment. Professor Jon Garon of Franklin Pierce Law Center will speak about a variety of intellectual property issues related to distance learning, including copyright and fair use. Professor Susan Richey, also of Franklin Pierce Law Center, will discuss a variety of additional, non-intellectual property issues related to the digital environment and distance learning, including privacy and first amendment rights of students and teachers.

During the luncheon break, Darcy Kirk, Law Library Director and Professor of Law at the University of Connecticut School of Law Library, will preside at the LLNE Busi-

ness Meeting, and special guest Sally Holterhoff, from the Valparaiso School of Law Library, will be representing the AALL Executive Board. After the programs, Professor Sarah Redfield will offer a distance learning demonstration and the library staff will provide library tours. Throughout the day's activities we will be trying to create an appropriate environment to help you remember the feeling of being at school, to enhance your understanding of education law by helping you regain the perspective of how it felt to be a student.

More information about the meeting and the speakers is available at the web site, <http://www.fplc.edu/library/llne.htm>.

Registration materials for the meeting have been mailed. If you need a registration packet or more information, please call (603) 228-1541, and speak with Roberta Woods at extension 1199 or Cindy Landau at extension 1132. Or you could email either of them at rwoods@piercelaw.edu or clandau@piercelaw.edu. We hope you will be able to join us for what should prove to be a very interesting and timely program, as well as providing a great chance for you to connect with other LLNE members.

Farewell to Maria

Maria Sekula, the layout editor of the LLNE Newsletter, has decided that she has designed her last newsletter. She sent along the following note :

“As you are now aware, I have stepped down as layout editor for *LLNE News* as of the last issue. Retirement has brought different priorities and some new ventures and, to tell the truth, I love being able to lay around and do nothing whenever I want.

I have always been a supporter of a newsletter for LLNE and I have thoroughly enjoyed being actively involved in its production over the last few years. It has developed into one of the best in the country through the work of its dedicated editors and staff. I look forward to its continuing existence in paper or in whatever new and wonderful formats may be on the horizon. Thank you all from my heart.



New Layout Editors

With Maria's departure, Sue Drisko and Diane Murley, both of Northeastern University School of Law Library, have kindly agreed to assume duties as co-layout editors. Both are former LLNE editors and will begin their positions with the next issue.

Additional Newsletter Information Now Available on the LLNE Website

The newsletter has added a great deal of newsletter information on the LLNE website, including upcoming deadlines and contact information. Please check it out at <http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/llne/newsltr.htm>. If you have any comments or suggestions for the page, please

IFLA Program- Middlesex Law Library

By Sandra Lindheimer
Head Law Librarian
Middlesex Law Library

**This article was inadvertently omitted from our last issue's series on participation in the August 2001 IFLA Conference held in Boston, Massachusetts. Our apologies to the author for the omission.*

The Middlesex Law Library (Trial Court of Massachusetts Law Libraries) sponsored a program for the IFLA Section on Government Libraries on Aug. 23, 2001 as part of the 67th General Conference of IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions). The program was held at the Middlesex Courthouse in Cambridge.

The program was titled: "Strategies for Recognition: How to Promote Government Library Services." Government libraries are often struggling hard to get appropriate recognition. IT, cooperation with other units/libraries and new means for customer relations are some ways to change the image and status.

This was truly an international program. Speakers came from London, Helsinki, Kenya, Stockholm, Denver and Boston. Attendees represented the following countries: Canada, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States.

As the program unfolded, it became clear that librarians the world over had similar issues and were working on novel approaches to solve some of these issues.

After the program, the attendees toured the Middlesex Law Library. In general, they were very impressed by the freedom of access for the public to our collection and various legal databases.

As a librarian for 25 years, I would have to say that this program was one of the most exciting events I have personally been involved with.

LLNE "Siteseeing" ***New Website Review Column***

Have you recently found a great web site that you would like to share with your colleagues? *LLNE News* is starting a new column where you can submit short reviews of your favorite new (or new to you) website. Reviews dealing with any subject area are welcome. They could be for work or for fun! Simply discuss the basic elements of the website, how you have found it useful, and why you are so impressed by it. Please e-mail all contributions to [Michelle Pearse at m.pearse@neu.edu](mailto:m.pearse@neu.edu).

Calling all Walkers! LLNE Service Committee's Inaugural Event

Ever taken part in the Walk for Hunger? Ever thought about it? Well, if so, this is the year for you! Please join LLNE as we Walk for Hunger together! This is the newly formed LLNE Service Committee's inaugural event, and we are hoping for a great turnout.

The Walk for Hunger is an annual charity walk of 20 miles (don't worry, you need not complete the whole walk - there are shuttle buses available) which raises millions each year to fund Project Bread's many activities to end hunger in Massachusetts. All you have to do to support this worthy cause is collect sponsor pledges and get ready for a great day of exercise in the beautiful spring weather with your friends from LLNE. As anyone who has completed the Walk knows, it is an inspiring and uplifting day. Live music, snacks, water and more are all provided along the route. LLNE's own Michelle Pearse, Service Committee member and a veteran of the Walk, will inspire and lead you through all 20 miles.

Hope to see you there on May 5!

For more information about the Walk or Project Bread, please see: <http://www.projectbread.org/Walk/walk.html>.

If you would like to sign up or would like more information, please e-mail Stephanie Burke, Chair, Service Committee at sjburke@bu.edu.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MEMBERS' LIBRARIES

MASSACHUSETTS

Massachusetts Trial Court Libraries

The following Trial Court Library (TCLL) staff members have announced their retirements in 2002:

Lois Kane, Head Law Librarian, Fall River Law Library
Margaretha Birknes, Head Law Librarian, New Bedford Law Library

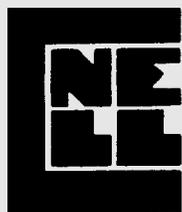
Dorby Thomas, Law Library Assistant, Worcester Law Library

Margaret Kurtigan, Custodian, Worcester Law Library
We wish them all well with their retirement plans and thank them for many years of public service to the TCLLs.

Barbara Fell Johnson, Head Law Librarian, Hampshire Law Library, recently received the Hampshire County Bar Association's Sexith Annual Contribution to Justice Award. This award is given by the Bar Association in appreciation to a justice system employee for extra efforts and thoughtfulness in their service. Congratulations, Barbara on a well-deserved honor.

Northeastern Receives Grant to Develop Web Tutorials on Legal Research

The Northeastern University Law School Library recently received a Teaching with Technology Fund grant from the university to develop web-based legal research tutorials. Although these tutorials will be designed for use by Northeastern University affiliates, the library plans to make them accessible to the public at large.



**NEW ENGLAND
LAW LIBRARY
CONSORTIUM**

NELLCO News

NOTES FROM NELLCO

**By Tracy L. Thompson
Executive Director
tracy.thompson@yale.edu
203-432-7371**

Sharon Hamby O'Connor, slated to begin a two-year term as President of NELLCO in July, 2002, will be stepping down as Associate Dean for Library and Computing Services at the Boston College Law Library as of June 1, 2002. Sharon will be serving as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the Law School for the 2002-2003 academic year, followed by a sabbatical the next year. Sharon has served as the Director of BC's Law Library for 23 years and her presence will be missed in the daily life of the library.

NELLCO will also feel Sharon's absence. Sharon has been an active and involved member of NELLCO, and has strongly encouraged participation by her staff in

the work of the consortium. Sharon has served as NELLCO's vice-president/president-elect since 2000. We send our best wishes with Sharon as she undertakes this new role in the life of the Boston College Law School, and we thank her for her dedication to NELLCO over the years.

Sharon's resignation means that she will not be serving as president of NELLCO for 2002-2004 term. A new incoming President will be elected at the upcoming NELLCO Directors' Meeting, scheduled for April 25 at Franklin Pierce Law Center, in conjunction with the LLNE meeting on April 26.

Social Law Library Author Series

Alan Dershowitz

By John Pedini
Director of Media Services
Social Law Library

What does Professor Alan Dershowitz think of the O.J. Simpson criminal prosecution team? Why did he regret a victory that kept John Lennon from being deported in the '70's? Why does he believe hatred for criminal defense lawyers is a good sign for America? The answers to these and many other questions were brought to the light as the Social Law Library's Author Series featured the Harvard Law School Professor, world-famous criminal defense lawyer, prolific author and media celebrity on Wednesday, December 19, 2001. With a very receptive crowd packed into the Library's Main Reading Room, Professor Dershowitz spoke with his trademark candor, wit and, at times, self-effacing humor on his latest book, *Letters To A Young Lawyer*.

If anyone is known for a comprehensive body of legal knowledge, it is Alan Dershowitz. His legacy is already legend. At 28, he was the youngest tenured professor at Harvard Law School. His list of even nominally famous clients, the likes of which include Soviet dissident Anatoly Shcharansky, hotel scion and noted tax refusenik Leona Helmsly and misguided auto entrepreneur John Z. DeLorean, make for a who's who of American trial lore. His books and articles have been translated into dozens of languages. His opinion is sought by presidential committees and talk show hosts alike. He even has a legal knick name: the Lawyer of Last Resort. So when he decides to write a book offering advice to young lawyers, it would be wise to pay heed. Many young and not-so-young lawyers (some already judges!)



and us lay folk attended his defense of his latest publication.

Not surprisingly, the audience was perhaps divided in its opinion of Professor Dershowitz from the outset. Many, regarding his defense of ignominious characters such as O.J. Simpson and Claus von Bulow, see him as contemptible. Others, noting his omnipresent media celebrity persona and outspokenness, find him annoying. The true believers, citing his record on civil rights and service to those in special need of appellate counsel, regard him as the very essence of the American legal profession. To say he won over a few converts as the night progressed, though, is a certainty. In the relaxed and confident manner that has made him a media darling, Professor Dershowitz graciously received a stirring introduction from Library Executive Director Robert J. Brink and launched into a thoughtful and relatively free form string of reminiscences, observations, admissions and suggestions.

A self-professed "bad student" in elementary and high school, he had barely made it into a college of his choice (Brooklyn), or any college for that matter. He became more ardent in higher education and then his legal studies at Yale, becoming editor-in-chief of the law journal.

A criminal defense lawyer at heart, he became disenchanted with some of the paragons of the judicial system, notably Clarence Darrow and Oliver Wendell Holmes, who were, according to Professor Dershowitz, possessed of questionable ethical beliefs

and, in some cases, practices (Darrow reputedly bribed witnesses and jurors). Creating his own list of dubious legal saints gave rise to one chapter in the book about choosing heroes wisely, and, citing which, he discussed the importance of young lawyers to avoid blind worship. Another chapter, dealing with creating an enemies list, advises beginning advocates not to be afraid of generating

negative attention in the interest of dealing with legal integrity. Professor Dershowitz also counseled young lawyers to refrain from doing what they were best at in favor of what they enjoyed the most, thereby securing longevity and satisfaction over possible burnout and cynicism.

Then his comments turned to a more personal note. Professor Dershowitz is still, after all, a human being much like the rest of us and, as such, is treated to the same set of circumstances, albeit sometimes on an understandably grander scale. He recalled attending Yom Kippur services immediately after the Simpson acquittal, and in a part of the ceremony where the congregation is asked to pound their hearts and respond to the question as to whether they had counseled evil, all eyes, according to Professor Dershowitz, that had been previously averted his direction were suddenly and pointedly fixed upon him at the utterance of this query. Even at his oration in the Library, amongst devotees, detractors and the few who still may not have an opinion, he came up against a member of the audience he described as his "own personal stalker", a disenfranchised intellectual of questionable hygiene, even taking time to acknowledge him by name, only to have the poor miscreant demand an answer to a question that had nothing at all to do with the proceedings whatsoever, and was of a dubious nature to boot!

(contin'd on page 11)

On the lighter side, Professor Dershowitz can lay some claim to having a life reminiscent of the average Joe. On the night of the presentation, his car service failed to pick him up at Bachrach Studios on Boylston St. and a Library employee had to escort him, by foot, to the Suffolk County Courthouse because he was not sure of the way (a little too much time in the ivory towers of academia, perhaps-Ed.). Then, after the question and answer period, he had to leave in a huff to catch a Celtics game. Bet he picked up a dog and a beer before getting in his seat!

Oh, and the answers to the questions? He thinks the O.J. criminal prosecution team was the “most inept bunch of lawyers/prosecutors he had ever seen”, who “handed the case to the defense on a silver platter”. As for the Lennon case, he feels as though if he had lost the case, John Lennon might be alive and well in London or Liverpool. Lennon’s widow Yoko Ono thinks it wasn’t the case at all. She claims the eight years John spent living in New York after that case were the “happiest of his life”. (Make of that what you will—it allowed her to remain in the United States permanently, and Lennon’s killer could have just as easily flown to London as he did to New York – Ed.) Finally, Professor Dershowitz believes that a healthy hatred of high profile self-serving criminal defense lawyers, such as we Americans enjoy, is a true sign of a vital, functioning democracy. Talk about the good life.

LLNE Executive Board Strategic Planning Meeting

LLNE (Law Librarians of New England) held a strategic planning meeting on Friday, January 25, 2002 at Boston College Law School. The meeting was an opportunity for the Executive Board and committee chairs to gather together and examine formally the current state of affairs for LLNE. Taking its lead from the AALL 2002-2005 Strategic Plan, the group, with the help of facilitator Maureen Sullivan, identified the many issues facing the chapter membership today (recruitment and retention, educational programs, technology, vendor relations, to name a few) and set out about devising concrete approaches for improving upon them.

One of the major considerations of the group was the structure of LLNE. The group plans to review policies and rethink the committee structure. They are also contemplating the possibility of bringing together certain committees which have similar goals, such as possibly combining the Internet, Public Relations and the Newsletter Committees and/or the Recruitment and Membership Committees. The Executive Committee will also examine the LLNE bylaws to see if they need to be updated/changed.

The group also expressed great interest in strengthening educational programming. A plan to implement a new program planning/education committee was introduced. Some other ideas for strengthening educational programming included partnering with other organizations and working with different “tracks” at meetings so that a wider range of interests could be met.

A common theme raised throughout the session was the need to communicate with the membership. The group stressed the importance of using all communications devices to keep information flowing, as well as the need for clarification of the uses and purposes of different communication tools.

Finally, the group agreed to pursue the following goals: increase the number of active members; establish a point person or committee for program planning; explore unique opportunities that LLNE has to offer its members that they do not already find elsewhere; announce new members at meetings and in the newsletter; reach out to new members (issue a personal invitation to be active); include student members on committees; and visit Simmons (and maybe Southern Connecticut and URI) classes to recruit new student members. The group also agreed to start a program of press releases and include some “fun” activities through the new Service Committee.

LLNE President Darcy Kirk and the other attendees agreed that the meeting was a great success and generated a renewed sense of commitment for them that they hope will extend into the LLNE membership at large.

New England Innovative Law Users Group (NEILUG)

The annual New England Innovative Law Users Group (NEILUG) meeting is scheduled to be held on Friday, October 4, 2002. It will be sponsored by the Suffolk University Law School Library and will be held at the Law School in downtown Boston. Registration and more detailed program information will be mailed out over the summer. Please share this information with all interested staff members at your institution. For further information or for program suggestions, please e-mail David Turkalo at Suffolk at: dturkalo@suffolk.edu

Please Don't Call Me a "Lawyer Librarian"

Diane Murley, Northeastern University Law Library

I have always hated the term "lawyer librarian," especially when it's been applied to me, but I have never been able to adequately explain the reason that I find it so distasteful.

Part of my objection is to what I see as misuse of the word "lawyer." Despite alternate definitions, I think the term generally carries the connotation of one who practices law. I do not practice law. I provide reference service in a law library, I teach legal research, and I do whatever else I can to help people make use of the library's resources. I am a law librarian. Although I practiced law years ago, I am not a lawyer.

I think that calling ourselves "lawyer librarians" instead of law librarians demonstrates a kind of insecurity about our chosen profession. It sounds like we think that being a law librarian is not good enough, so we have to set ourselves above those librarians who don't have the dual degrees. I have known many fine law librarians who do not have JDs. The fact that I survived three years of law school and the bar examination process does not make me a better law librarian than any of them. And calling myself a "lawyer librarian" is unnecessarily insulting to their professionalism.

Furthermore, I don't think that the term "lawyer librarian" impresses anybody whom we are trying to impress. Students, while they occasionally appreciate the fact that we understand the ordeal law school can be, don't care about our degrees as long as we help them with their research. And certainly faculty, if impressive at all, are not impressed by anything other than good service. If the title "lawyer librarian" were more impressive than law librarian, they would call themselves "lawyer professors."

But perhaps what troubles me the most is my fear that the biggest insecurity revealed by our use of the term "lawyer librarian" is the fear that we are not good enough librarians. Are we just ex-lawyers, or perhaps recovering lawyers, who work in a law library? Why else would we need to refer to a former job in describing our current profession? I had a number of jobs before coming to librarianship, including cashier, baby sitter, and stage manager, all of which provided me with skills I use to this day. But, even when it seems more descriptive, I have never referred to myself as "baby sitter librarian."

Newsletter Survey Results

Thank you to all who participated in our recent survey of readership interest in an electronic version of the newsletter. An overwhelming majority of respondents desire an electronic format. The results were as follows:

Total number of responses: 42

- Would you like to see the LLNE News available in electronic format?
Yes 38 No 4
- If the newsletter were available in an electronic format, would you still want to receive a print copy?
Yes 10 No 32
- Which electronic format(s) would you prefer?
Web only: 10
E-mail only: 18
Web and e-mail: 14
- If it were available on the web, would you like to see it in HTML, pdf or as a word processing file?
(Check as many as apply.)
Pdf attachment only: 13
All 3: 3
HTML and word processing: 1
HTML and pdf: 3
- If it were available via e-mail, would you prefer? (Check as many as apply.)
All 4: 3
Pdf attachment: 7
Link to web: 14
Word-processed attachment: 2
Text within the message: 2
Word and link: 3
Text and link: 1
Pdf and word: 1
Pdf and text: 1
Pdf and link: 2
Pdf, word and link: 1
Word, text within and link: 3
- Do you subscribe to the LLNE list-serv?
Yes: 30 No: 10
- Are you a member of AALL?
Yes: 32 No: 9
- Do you have Internet access at home?
Yes: 31 No: 11

What Are You Reading?



by Diane Murley, Northeastern University School of Law Library

Thanks to everyone who sent book recommendations for this issue. I think you'll enjoy these.

Annie Hawes, *Extra Virgin: A Young Woman Discovers The Italian Riviera Where Every Month Is Enchanted*.

This charming book is a travel essay quite similar to Peter Mayle's *A Year in Provence* and Frances Mayes' *Under the Tuscan Sun*. Annie Hawes's style is smart and funny and wonderfully descriptive of the traditions, food, wine and people of Liguria. A marvelous escape.

· Stacey M. DiFazio, Bulkley, Richardson and Gelinas, LLP

Martin Booth, *The Industry of Souls*. My book group recently read this runner-up for the Booker Prize of a few years ago. On his 80th birthday an Englishman living in Russia is about to be visited by members of his family from England, who have just discovered that he is still living. As he goes for a walk around the village before the visitors arrive he remembers his imprisonment in a Russian Gulag for 25 years, and the friendships and events that had an impact on his life, both in the Gulag and in the village. He must also decide whether to go back to England with the visitors or spend his remaining days in the Russian village. It's a wonderful story and we all loved it.

· Sara L. Zagorski, Day, Berry & Howard LLP

American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology.

Get a leg up on those nighttime crime investigation dramas like *CSI* and *Crossing Jordan* by reading the sole authority on death investigation. A simple, unassuming journal, the *AJFMP* presents a myriad of articles on all facets of forensic exploration: the gruesome, the outlandish, the simplistic and the sublime. For instance, I had never known that when a man is run over by a steamroller, his heart will almost always pop out his throat, it being the path of least resistance. Then there's the woman who committed suicide by cutting her left arm off with a chainsaw. Experts could not conclude why she did it. They did know, however, one thing; she was right-handed. These and so many more voyages to post-mortem adventure await you with but a single issue of *American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology*. You'll be smarter than the *CSI* gang and way more intuitive than *Jordan* with just one read.

· John Pedini, Social Law Library

Geraldine Brooks, *Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague*.

I never would have believed that I would enjoy a book about the bubonic plague! The story is based on the real-life town of Eyam in Derbyshire which voluntarily isolates itself from contact with outsiders for a year in order to stop the spread of the plague. The main character, Anna Firth, is a strong, resourceful woman. I eagerly followed her every step and would highly recommend the book, even though the ending is a bit bizarre.

· Anne M. Acton, New England School of Law Library

Chris Sherman & Gary Price, *The Invisible Web: Uncovering Information Sources Search Engines Can't See*.

This is the best book about Web research I have read in a long time! The authors do a great job of explaining what the Invisible Web includes (basically everything not indexed by general search engines), and how a good researcher can find it. They also provide nice, basic explanations of how

the Internet, the Web, search engines and other search tools work. They estimate the Invisible Web is between two and fifty times larger than the visible Web. The second half of the book is an annotated bibliography of Invisible Web resources. See also the companion site at <http://www.invisible-web.net> (accessed Feb. 26, 2002).

· Diane Murley, Northeastern University Law Library

Elizabeth McCracken, *Niagara Falls All Over Again*.

This novel tells the life story of straight man Mike Sharp of the wildly successful comedy team Carter and Sharp. All the stock characters appear; every standard show-biz triumph and reversal, every Hollywood-script personal fulfillment and tragedy, follows in order as the years roll on. There is nothing new; there are no surprises. It isn't even an interesting or amusing life. And yet I could not put this book down. McCracken has written the narrator a voice which utterly charms.

· Susan More, Northeastern University Law Library

If you have read something that you recommend, send the author, title, and a few sentences about why you recommend it to d.murley@neu.edu. It can be a book, magazine, or article of any genre. When the editors send out the call for articles, I will compile the recommendations I have received into a column for everyone. Thanks for your help.

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Please join us in Orlando
(Check final Program for room location)

LLNE / SNELLA Joint Chapter Luncheon

Tuesday, July 23, 2002 from noon – 1:30 p.m.
Peabody Hotel



Menu

Seasoned Field Greens w/ Cherry Tomatoes & Assorted Dressings
Sliced Fresh Fruit & Seasonal Berries
Red Bliss Potato & Green Onion Salad w/ Stone Ground Mustard Dressing
Pasta Salad w/ Julienne Vegetables
Assorted Deli Meats & Cheeses
Freshly Baked Peabody Deli Breads

Freshly Baked Brownies & Chocolate Chip, Oatmeal & Chocolate Nut Cookies
Freshly Brewed Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee and Tea

\$20.00 per person

Please detach and send registration form and fee (checks payable to LLNE) by May 23rd

Yes, I'll see you at the LLNE / SNELLA Joint Chapter Luncheon in Orlando.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Institution: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zipcode: _____

Please mail to: Darcy Kirk, University of Connecticut School of Law, 39 Elizabeth Street
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