

120 1 53

Minnesota State Law Library Annual Report 2004

243,233

7.2%

0.0082

BY THE NUMBERS

2 1,598

Written by
Barbara Golden Daniel Lunde
Randi Madisen Dennis Skrade

748 12

6%

8

Prepared for Electronic Display and Distribution by
Elizabeth Tuckwood

\$105.50

415,289

From the State Law Librarian

Minnesota State Law Library Index

155 years old

8 main locations since 1849

26 State Law Librarians since 1849

In 2004

36,209 square feet

243,233 print/audiovisual items

415,289 microfiche

1,106 serial subscriptions

1 PC in use for 21 years

815 volunteer hours

17 full- and part-time staff

191 total years working in Library

13 bachelor degrees

5 history majors

12 master degrees

2 juris doctorates

0.0082 percent of state operating expenses

The library can never be fully replaced by information technologies. For the essence of its communal role is not the technological mastery over knowledge and information, but rather the provision of sanctuary for human thought and expression in any medium.

Excerpt from "Vision of the Communal Roles of Libraries." Endorsed the 31st day March, 2005 by Faculty, Fellows and Observers of the Salzburg Seminar, *Libraries in the 21st Century*, hosted Oct. 23-30, 2004, Schloss Leopoldskron, Salzburg, Austria.

When a report is subtitled "By the Numbers," it is prudent to point out that numbers cannot paint the whole picture. While statistics are important indices, libraries are much, much more. The characterization quoted above is from a vision statement adopted by 48 representatives of all types of libraries (including law) from 27 countries. Certainly the Minnesota State Law Library has a communal role. The Library continues to sponsor *Everybody Wins!* in which judicial employees read to and with first grade students at the Benjamin Mays Elementary School. The Library is the "town square" of the Minnesota Judicial Center, sponsoring programs which bring our users together in a judicial community. One 2004 program celebrated the 50th anniversary of the landmark U. S. Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education*, which resulted in the integration of schools. This program included a reenactment of the oral arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court portrayed by members of the Minnesota Supreme Court. The success of this program led to an even more public presentation on Peavy Plaza in Minneapolis sponsored by the Hennepin County Bar Association and the Minnesota Association of Black Lawyers.

The statistics above show a sizable collection, but our most important resource is people. You can compute that a member of the State Law Library staff averages eleven years of experience within the Library and that includes two people who joined the staff in 2004! As State Law Librarian, I can attest to the efficiency and helpfulness of our experienced staff. When you look at the numbers throughout this report, we hope you will discern a dedicated staff, expert at delivering legal information services while conserving resources.

Public and Electronic Services

2004 Index

14,000+ questions answered
 53 questions per day
 536 email questions
 176 letters from jail inmates
 2,344 items circulated
 15,342 web pages
 1,534 appellate court opinions archived
 13,380 web site search queries per month
 25,000+ visits to web site per month
 11,000+ unique visitors to web site per month
 748 PowerPoint introductions emailed

An emphasis of the current library administration is service to the Minnesota judicial branch. This is reflected in public services statistics, which show an increase in usage by court personnel, equaling private attorneys for the first time.

Patron Categories	2002	2003	2004
Court	15%	22%	27%
Other Government	6%	10%	10%
Attorney	36%	32%	27%
Public	43%	36%	36%

Each new judicial employee is sent a PowerPoint presentation, which provides basic information on what the Library can provide and various ways that we can be contacted. Throughout the year we also send out monthly reminders about new library materials acquired and new online resources that are available both in the Library and on the desktop. We meet with judicial staff to discuss what the Library can do to help with their work and judicial priorities. We also actively notify specific individuals of materials that might be helpful to their work, and we have a Table of Contents service. Of the items circulated, 55% were to state government users, which include court personnel.

Public Service staff gave many tours and training sessions in 2004, including library orientations for new law clerks joining the appellate courts. Through the County Law Library Program

(CLLP), the State Law Library helps the Judicial branch reach out to Minnesotans throughout the state. The CLLP Coordinator organized both a CLLP Spring Conference and an Annual Meeting in the fall. McLeod and Carver county law libraries received on-site visits.

As a public law library, Minnesota citizens continue to be our largest patron category. More and more of our services are delivered via the Internet, email and phone. In fact, Saturday hours were discontinued in 2004 because low usage did not justify the staffing time and expense. One interesting statistic we noted this year involved our fee-based photocopy service and special populations. In 2004, 40% of all photocopies mailed went to jail inmates, while 10% went to state hospital inmates.

The Minnesota State Law Library web site serves the judiciary and the public by providing 24/7 access to court information like the archive of Minnesota appellate court opinions. Our “Docket Series” provides topical assistance to using the Library. New in 2004 were *Pathfinder to Youth and the Law*, *Pathfinder to American Indian Law*, *Same-Sex Marriage*, and *Pathfinder to Law on the Edge: Sovereign Citizens, Common Law Courts, Patriot Groups, Tax Protesters, et al.* We also added a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section with the answers to many common “Ask a Law Librarian” email questions.

Most Popular Pages in 2004

Homepage at <http://www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/>

Opinion Archive at <http://www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/archive/>

Internet Legal Resources at <http://www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/mnlr.html>

Ordinances at <http://www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/ordinance.html>

The Library subscribes to several online services that serve patrons in the Library as well as court staff. 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. The Library also offered online access to several legal resources. H.W. Wilson’s *Index to Legal Periodicals* was searched 469 times, with 4,059 citations and abstracts retrieved. Public patrons and Library staff used Lexis online legal resources for more than 600 hours. HeinOnline allowed patrons in the Minnesota Judicial Center access to full text articles from law reviews.

Law Library Service to Prisoners

2004 Index

8,265 prisoners

120 prison visits

9,552 miles traveled

1,598 inmate interviews

1,776 inmates helped

29,037 items delivered

Law Library Service to Prisoners (LLSP) reached a benchmark in 2004. This unique program celebrated its 20th anniversary with a special program on May 14. LLSP, funded by an inter-agency agreement with the Department of Corrections, began as a pilot project in 1984, with one librarian visiting five correctional facilities and a clerk assisting with the research and paperwork. Today, the staff includes two and one-half librarians, as well as a part-time clerk. LLSP librarians visit inmates in each of the eight primary adult correctional facilities at least once per month. Any inmate can request an interview with the librarian at the prison library or, in special circumstances, at their cell. During the interview, the inmate explains what he or she needs, and the librarian responds by providing them with pertinent legal research material. A prisoner can also request help by kite (an internal correctional request form), letter and/or phone. Pathfinders and instructional handouts are created to make inmate research as easy as possible and articles are written for the inmate newsletters. A core collection of legal materials is available at each of the prison libraries. This collection is reviewed annually to assure that inmates have access to essential legal information at each correctional facility. By helping inmates to educate themselves about the law, their legal rights, and the merits of any potential claim, LLSP assists in channeling inmate concerns in a productive direction and reduces the likelihood that inmates will file frivolous lawsuits or engage in unnecessary litigation. The LLSP program was assisted by three interns and two volunteers during 2004.

[LLSP 2004 Annual Report](#)

Technical Services

2004 Index

\$105.50 = cost of a NW reporter volume
15% yearly increase in cost since 2002
7.2% = increase in gasoline prices since 2002
8,213 print volumes added
14,020 microfiche added
1,631 briefs processed
278 brief volumes added & 1398 microfiche produced
1,827 transcripts processed
615 electronic records added to the online catalog
9,043 federal depository items added
22,236 online catalog edits

The Technical Services Department does the important day to day work of ordering and processing new volumes for the collection, filing loose-leaves, adding opinions to the online archive, processing and binding appellate court briefs, adding electronic documents to the collection, and cataloging web sites. All of these procedures take time, expertise, and a dedication to make our collection the best, most up-to-date legal collection serving the judicial branch and the citizens of the State of Minnesota.

Technical Services is responsible for the online catalog which is very much a living and breathing entity that needs constant attention. It is fine-tuned daily to accurately reflect what the Library has at the present for use by judicial staff, state employees, attorneys, and citizens wishing to do pro se research. Our goal is an online catalog that is easy to understand and to use for all patrons. One of the most important things we do is to provide cataloging services for the county law libraries that participate in our statewide online catalog through the County Law Library Program. We do this at a very modest fee so county law libraries will have their materials online along with ours and available to Minnesota citizens. As of this date we have 9 of 10 judicial districts covered by county law libraries with their records in our catalog. Last year, we cataloged 750 titles for the county law libraries.

The Library participates in the GPO Federal Depository program. Last year we received 6915 depository items. We also manage a cooperative depository program for other state agency libraries, in which 185 selected depository materials were shipped to the participating/requesting state agency library. The Superintendent of Documents has given high marks and praise for our program and cited it as a model of cooperation and sharing of government information. We continue to add hotlinks to electronic government documents and web sites so our patrons have the best and most up-to-date information available to them.

In addition to our on-going work, two major events happened in 2004. First, we completed a project of attaching hotlinks to the catalog records for primary legal materials from all 50 states. This makes primary sources available to users anywhere there is an Internet connection.

Hotlink Examples from the Five State Area

Iowa court rules at <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Rules/2003/court/gna1.pdf>

Wisconsin official statutes at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/stats.html>

South Dakota session laws at <http://legis.state.sd.us/sessions/SessionLaws.htm>

North Dakota state agency rules at <http://www.state.nd.us/lr/information/rules/admincode.html>

Second, we automated our serials system. We took a gigantic leap from recording information on paper to entering it into an online system. This was, and is, a significant step for the Library. Utilizing our existing staff, we trained and started in late summer to convert the paper records, working our way slowly through the materials the Library receives. Flexibility is the key, looking at each record as a puzzle to solve. In 2004, 427 serial paper records were converted to an electronic record with a predictable pattern. This makes it easier for Library staff to claim missing issues or volumes. It also informs users as to the exact status of Library materials. We expect full conversion in 2005.

[More Technical Services statistics](#)

BY ANY NUMBER, the Minnesota State Law Library staff is ready and willing to meet the varied, simple and complex legal research needs of its users.