Helping people and guiding people through the information maze is the hallmark of our profession.

As we speed towards the closing days of yet another LLAM year, I’ve been pondering where our profession shall be in the next few years. I’m sure you’ve read the various reports about the hot up-and-coming jobs over the past few years. Often, librarian is one of those “in demand” jobs. However, I have watched our society move from an industrial/production-based economy to a service-based economy and now to a self-service economy. I was amazed when I saw the first self-checkout register…. at Home Depot! I can’t really say this shift is good or bad. It just is. Like everything else, there are good and bad points to a self-service economy.

But where do we fit in as the major vendors are able to fill our traditional role with ever more sophisticated user interfaces and more human-like search algorithms? I firmly believe that no matter how “self-serve” information tools become, that there will ALWAYS be the need for people to help people.

Helping people and guiding people through the information maze is the hallmark of our profession. Case in point: LLAM’s most recent Legal Research Institute. We had a good turnout this year. This is as much a testament to the need for personal human attention as it is for the hard work of the LRI organizers and presenters (See story, p. 5.)

So, let us take time to thank the LLAM members who worked so hard to make LRI happen. Let us thank them for doing such an outstanding job demonstrating our value to a society whose members are increasingly used to doing every specialized task for themselves. Thank you, all.
LLAM Spring Fling- “Fling at the Ballpark”

By Pat Behles
Reference/ Govt. Documents Librarian
University of Baltimore Law Library

Join LLAM for Bowie Baysox Pink Day at the Park (for Breast Cancer Awareness) - **Sunday May 7**! The Bowie Baysox will play the Akron Aeros. The first 100 ladies will receive pink Baysox hats. Gates open at 12 noon - food starts at 12:30.

We have reserved the Patuxtent private deck on the upper level, 3rd base side. LLAM members will enjoy a two-hour buffet to include turkey, entrée du jour, pasta, fresh veggies, fruit, rolls, burgers, hot dogs, salads, and dessert (with iced tea, soft drinks, lemonade, and popcorn 'til the top of the 8th.) We will also have a LLAM auction to benefit a breast cancer research charity. The cost is $25….seats are limited.

RSVP by April 28 to Kathie Sweeney, Library Director, Semmes, Bowen & Semmes, 250 W. Pratt St., 16th Floor, Baltimore, MD. 21201

For directions and other info check out [http://www.baysox.com/](http://www.baysox.com/)

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LLAM works with MLA in Legislative Promotion

By Catherine McGuire
Outreach Services Law Librarian
Maryland State Law Library

February 1st, 2006 was proclaimed Maryland Library Day by a Maryland Senate Resolution presented to Irene Padilla, Assistant State Superintendent for Libraries, and Kay Bowman, President of the Maryland Library Association. On that day, LLAM Immediate Past President Joan Bellistri of the Anne Arundel County Public Law Library joined with colleagues from the MLA and others in the library community from across the state, in visiting their representatives in the General Assembly to promote Maryland Libraries. The day ended at a reception in the Miller Senate Office Building, where Senator Thomas V. (Mike) Miller, President of the Senate and a staunch proponent of libraries, addressed the community, and was presented with a “Read” poster featuring his own photograph. Joining Joan were LLAM members Steve Anderson and Catherine McGuire of the Maryland State Law Library.

After LLAM offered last year to participate in MLA’s Legislative Day, we were invited to join the membership of the MLA Legislative Panel. Joan Bellistri has been attending the monthly meetings and coordinated LLAM’s participation in Legislative Day. Other Maryland library organizations represented in the Panel include MEMO (Maryland Educational Media Organization) and CALD (Congress of Academic Library Directors of Maryland.) In addition to planning the Legislative Day for libraries, the Panel monitors state and federal legislation of significance to libraries and coordinates lobbying efforts when appropriate.

Current lobbying efforts of the group are focused on a bill to establish a grant program in the State Department of Education to assist in the funding of county public library capital projects. The bill is now introduced and numbered in each chamber as S. 709 and H.B. 1380. The House version was reported favorably with amendments by the Ways and Means Committee, and passed the Third Reading unanimously on March 23, 2006. The Senate version was reported favorably with amendments by the Budget and Taxation Committee and passed its Second Reading on the same day the House passed the Third. The library committee awaits further developments.

LLAM is Going to Washington!

On Wednesday, April 26th, LLAM will tour of the Law Library of Congress and the Folger Shakespeare Library. We are due at the Law Library of Congress at 10 a.m. for a tour of the reading room and discussion on the services it provides, and perhaps a tour of the foreign law section. After lunch at the Library of Congress lunchroom (bring cash as many of the federal cafeterias do not take plastic), we will walk the short distance to the Folger Library. There, we will have a brief intro to the Folger and see a couple of their special paintings. Then we’ll walk through the original reading room, decorated to look like an Elizabethan Great Hall, and go down to one of their seminar rooms for a display of rare law books (and a few others like Shakespeare’s First Folio.) After that we can look at the exhibition on Shakespeare for Children.

Transportation: We will meet at the Law Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave, SE., at 10 a.m. Meet a Baltimore contingent to take the 8:10 MARC train to DC ($14 round trip) or meet us at the Law Library. Come for the entire day…or just the a.m. or p.m. tours. Please indicate your plans when you RSVP — by 4/24 to Pat Behles.
“Indexes, Taxonomies, and the Google Generation”

by Kristen Baginski
Research Librarian
University of Maryland School of Law

On February 15th, members of LLAM carefully picked their way through the piles of grey snow littering the Baltimore city streets to the offices of Miles & Stockbridge, PC, to enjoy a wonderful lunch and an entertaining and informative program by Chuck Knapp, BNA Indexing Manager for Legal Services Publishing Group & Tax Management. Mr. Knapp was there to tell us that what we don’t know can indeed hurt us!

Mr. Knapp’s presentation, “The Index vs. The Text Search”, demonstrated, by way of a study that compared success rates and completion times for locating information online, that indexes are not only useful, but in fact are necessary for doing comprehensive, complete online research.

In order to test the theory that researchers who rely only on text searches are missing information, BNA conducted a usability study to look at the disparity between text searching and research that was aided by indexes.

Mr. Knapp talked to us about the impetus behind conducting the study: the notion that if electronic replaces print, then we won’t need indexes anymore. Is this true? And if not, how can we measure how much indexes help?

So BNA, led by Mr. Knapp, decided to brave the law student frontier and conducted a usability study that compared law student success rates and searching times between index searches and text searches for a variety of legal research questions. The vehicle for the research was the BNA U.S. Law Week online publication.

The results probably astounded the law students (but then what doesn’t?), but for those of us who know the value of an index - and what a special and rarified group we are! - the results should make us all feel good that our jobs as indexers and librarians are secure in this age of online resources.

The study tested 27 law students, who were given 30 minutes to answer seven legal questions: one unguided, three with an index, and three using a text search. The results back up what we as librarians have been trying to tell our users: USE THE INDEX!!! IT WILL HELP YOU!!!!

The results of the study were telling. When using the index to find the answers, users had an overall success rate of 86%, compared to only 23% for the text searches. Even better news for the legal field where time is money: the index users’ overall average time was 57 seconds, compared to 2 minutes and 47 seconds of search time for the text users. Perhaps the best news of the study is that 85% of the students who participated thought the index was easy to use.

Mr. Knapp concluded his presentation by discussing additional opportunities for user improvement based on the results of the study. Already BNA has used the study to slightly redesign its index button with future plans to make searching the index even easier for BNA users.

As librarians, we should be heartened by these results and should renew our dedication to educating our legal researchers, whether they be nervous first years, wizened judges, whipper-snapper associates, or dyed-in-the-wool “I only use print resources” partners, to avail themselves not just of indexes, but of online indexes whenever possible. We should not just be advocates, but “zealous advocates” of indexes, because as I routinely preach to my first year students, what they don’t know, especially in the legal field, can, and in fact, will hurt them.
LLAM 2006 Legal Research Institute a Success!

by Pat Behles
Gost. Documents & Reference Librarian
University of Baltimore School of Law

This year LLAM took a different slant in presenting the Legal Research Institute. The first two institutes focused on different aspects of legal research. This year the committee decided, based on participant feedback, to offer some topic-specific sessions. For this LRI, held at the University of Baltimore School of Law, participants had the choice of attending one-hour sessions on Basic Legal Research, Corporate Law, Business Law, Immigration Law, Family Law, Bankruptcy Law, Criminal Law, and Health Law.

Forty-four participants from varying backgrounds and places of employment attended, including law firm and court paralegals and library staff, as well as public and academic library staff. Instructors included Joanne Dugan* and Will Tress from the University of Baltimore School of Law; Susan Herrick from the University of Maryland School of Law; Trevor Rosen*, librarian from Shapiro, Sher, Guinot & Sandler; Steve Anderson and Catherine McGuire* from the Maryland State Law Library; and Pam Gregory from the Maryland Legal Assistance Network.

In addition to those whose names appear with * above, committee members planning this event were Joan Bellistri from the Anne Arundel Circuit Court Library; Scott Stevens from the Baltimore County Circuit Court Library; Maxine Grosshans from the University of Maryland School of Law Library; and Pat Behles from the University of Baltimore Law Library. Special thanks are due to Catherine McGuire who served as Public Relations chair for this event and also as registrar.

Comments from participants were highly favorable; most stated that they would have liked more time devoted to each topic. Seeds are already germinating for the next institute!

FYI: Tuesday, March 14, 2006, Marked the Seventieth Birthday of the Federal Register!

by Pat Behles
Gost. Documents & Reference Librarian
University of Baltimore School of Law

The Federal Register is the official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, and notices of federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents. Legal historians credit Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis for making the Federal Register a reality. He saw the need based on the increase in regulations generated by the New Deal and the non-existent central recordkeeping. Cases were being lost for want of the copy of a regulation! He is also quoted as saying, “Publicity is justly commended as a remedy for social and industrial diseases. Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants; electric light the most efficient policeman.”

The first issues were more a diary of completed rulemakings—about five items a day, totaling about 1,500 pages for the first six months. In contrast, 75,675 pages were printed in 2004. In 1946, the government opened proposed regulations for public comment. In its 70-year history, the Federal Register has NEVER missed a day of publication (so there, Ironman!)

The Federal Register is now available online in a variety of places, (from GPOAccess, LexisNexis, Westlaw, and HeinOnline, just to name a few) but continues to be published in print. Messengers continue to run between the Federal Register Office and the Government Printing Office for official signatures.
The luckiest thing that ever happened to me was the opportunity to work with Margaret Edwards at the end of her, and the beginning of my, library career. Mrs. Edwards was a pioneer in library services to young adults. She started this service at the Enoch Pratt Free Library and, through her writing and teaching and impact on everyone she trained, became one of the greatest and most influential librarians ever. When I started as a young adult librarian, I had just come from teaching in junior high school and I never wanted to see another teen-ager as long as I lived. After a few months, I was offered a transfer to another department but, by that time, I had been touched by the Edwards vision and I did not want to leave.

Mrs. Edwards could have been a great actress or a great writer or the President of the United States, but what was most unusual about her was her ability to inspire others to do more than they ever thought possible. Imagine me in front of a high school class keeping them enthralled or laughing with a book talk. (Well, I don’t know if I ever did that, but she certainly did!) She was not interested in providing information; she wanted to open teen-agers’ eyes to the world outside their own and to make them feel empathy and compassion. Of course, we provided the information they needed for their schoolwork in the hopes that we would gain their trust and could then introduce them to reading for pleasure. I read enormous numbers of car stories and sports stories and dating stories (does anyone remember Rosamund DuJardin?) so that I could talk about them and then maybe persuade the young adults to read the Diary of Anne Frank, To Kill a Mockingbird and Cry, the Beloved Country.

Mrs. Edwards and her husband, Doc Edwards, the long-time beloved principal of City College, lived on a farm. Before coming to work in the city, she would feed the animals and dig holes for fence posts and do the other chores. When she retired, we gave her a bull. I thought at first that they had said “bowl” but she was not the silver bowl kind of person. We gave her a bull calf that was subsequently named Bully Sol Edwards. (For those of you too young to remember, in the 1960’s there was a scandal involving a Texas lobbyist named Billy Sol Estes.)

From Mrs. Edwards, I learned never to denigrate or dismiss someone’s request, to anticipate requests, and to welcome people to the library (no hiding behind a book at the desk.) I have been able to use some of the techniques I learned even with attorneys — especially in finding the hook to grab people’s interest in speaking or writing. She was unique; no one who knew her could ever forget her.

When my children were small, I worked at part-time jobs and when they were old enough for me to go back to work full-time, I discovered that public libraries were not hiring. At one time, I had four simultaneous part-time jobs, one of which was at the University of Maryland Law School Library copying cases for prisoners. When there was an opening at the library, I was hired as a refer-
ence/cataloging librarian. I knew less than nothing about legal research when I began, but I am a fast learner and I had the advantage of working with an excellent reference librarian, Maxine Grosshans. I will always be grateful to Barbara Gontrum for giving me a job and an entree into law librarianship. At the time, I was working from one to nine p.m., but my daughter was a young teen-ager and I thought that I should be home with her in the evenings. And so I went to the Baltimore Bar Library.

Kai-Yun Chiu and I did not always see eye to eye, but I remain grateful to her for two things. First, I learned every aspect of law library management. I had worked before in reference and cataloging but, for the first time, I worked in acquisitions. If I had ever given any thought to acquisitions, I must have believed that you order the book, the book arrives, and you pay for the book. Silly me! I learned all the intricacies of dealing with vendors and, from Kai-Yun, I learned to take anything they said with a shaker of salt. Second, she took me with her to AALL annual meetings and other library gatherings. I even had the opportunity to go to an institute at Oxford – the absolute best week of my life, not just for being in a fourteenth century college and learning so much, but because I could now add “studied at Oxford” to my resume. Of course, I knew that she took me along because she wanted an entourage and not to further my growth. But who cares? I got to see the country and meet some great people.

The second luckiest thing that ever happened to me was coming to the Attorney General’s Office. This is an exciting place to work because it is at the center of the Maryland legal community. I can help find information for someone on one day and then read about it in the newspapers the next. The Attorney General is a kind, caring person, and that filters down to the entire staff, who are very appreciative of anything done for them. Of course, when people thank me profusely, I always say that it was not I who found the information, but the wonderful people at Government Reference, Legislative Services, the State Law Library, the law firms, or the two law schools who helped find it.

When I started in librarianship, technology consisted of IBM punched cards and a needle. I am a Luddite at heart and I had to be dragged kicking and screaming into the twenty-first century (maybe even the twentieth.) For a long time, I resisted blogs – now I think that they are great – but I do not want to hear the word “podcasting.” By the time that the next wonderful innovation comes along, I will probably have accepted podcasting, too. Technology has made us run faster and jump higher, but I think that we could find the information that our patrons want and need if we used a stylus and a clay tablet.

Librarians are incredible people – helpful, generous, knowledgeable, intuitive – and I wish that everyone appreciated us. But, for as long as I have been a librarian, I have heard librarians whining. I bet that, in Alexandria, some librarian was saying in Greek or Egyptian, “We don’t get no respect.” Public relations helps, of course; we have to get the word out, but zillions of dollars in advertising could not get people to buy new Coke or the Edsel. In a way, I can understand our place in society – much loved but ill paid. If you have sewage backing up in your basement, who is more important to you – a librarian or a plumber? Which would have more effect on our world – a strike by garbage collectors or a strike by librarians? (Who would notice?) I still think that listening to people, understanding their requests, giving them accurate, complete information, and teaching them how to find information in books, online, or in whatever format is around the corner, will gain us and all librarians respect.

When I was a child, I do not think that I dreamed of being a librarian. I probably would have preferred being a spy or a princess. Now, looking back, I know that I have the best profession in the world, and I cannot imagine any other.
“With BNA’s electronic delivery, information is never lost in the mail. It’s the first publication delivered to our attorneys in the morning and has no competition in its field as far as timeliness and depth of coverage.

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Maryland Provides Electronic Access to Trial-Level Case Records

By Maxine Grosshans and Jenny Smith
Research Librarians, University of Maryland School of Law

The Maryland Judiciary now offers access to trial level court records with two databases. The Maryland Judiciary Case Search (MDJCS) and the Judicial Information Systems (JIS) work independently of each other, but share some common content and search options.

Maryland Judiciary Case Search (MDJCS)

The Maryland Judiciary Case Search (MDJCS) is the newer of the two databases and is available for public Internet access. There is no charge – simply type [http://casesearch.courts.state.md.us/](http://casesearch.courts.state.md.us/) into the URL search box of your favorite browser. An introductory page with a short explanation of the MDJCS database and a users’ agreement appears. A user must agree to the terms of the agreement before continuing further. After clicking the agreement box, the next page is the actual search page template. It is now possible to search for information at the Maryland trial-level by a defendant’s name, city/state, case number, date of birth, plaintiff’s name (civil cases only), trial date, charge, and case disposition. In addition a case can be searched by related names: attorney, plaintiff or witness.

Courts included in this database are: Maryland District Court (traffic, criminal and civil) and Maryland Circuit Court (criminal and civil). The Circuit Courts for Montgomery and Prince George’s counties are not yet available. Dates of coverage vary with each jurisdiction and depend upon the date an automated case management system was instituted. Information is updated almost immediately in the circuit courts. The currency of the data for the District Courts is indicated on the “case Display” screen.

The sample search shown retrieves information by attorney name. The Participant Name is Millemann – with attorney as a choice in the Party Type box. Only criminal cases in the Baltimore City Circuit and District Courts have been selected as part of the search strategy.

Once the search has been run, a case can be chosen by clicking the case number link.

The Case information page includes the following data: Court System, Case Number, Case Status, Case Disposition, Case Type, Tracking Number, Issued Date, Defendant Name, City/State, Date of Birth, Description of Charge(s) and their Disposition. The District Court – Criminal for Baltimore City is the court named in this sample search.

The MDJCS is a work in progress. Additional information such as Circuit Court records for Montgomery and Prince George’s counties will hopefully be added in the near future. If further information about a case is needed, the researcher must go to the Court House in which the case was heard for the complete case file.

Judicial Information Systems (JIS)

Judicial Information Systems (JIS) [www.courts.state.md.us/dialup.html](http://www.courts.state.md.us/dialup.html) is the Maryland Judiciary’s databases of select trial-level case docket sheets. Case docket sheets contain basic information about the case and list the filing, disposition, and other events that have occurred. JIS does not offer the full case file, which includes any motions, exhibits, briefs, or decisions.

JIS is accessible on public computers at Maryland courthouses. With a $50 annual registration fee, JIS is also available to its approximately 2000 subscribers by a dial-up connection on four dedicated fax lines (in other words, there is one fax line per 500 users). JIS has a non-windows command-line user interface created in the 1980’s.

(Continued on page 10)
JIS provides databases of docket sheets on Maryland District Court civil and criminal cases, Circuit Court civil (UIC) cases, Circuit Court land and plat records, Anne Arundel County’s and Carroll County’s Circuit Court criminal cases, and Baltimore City’s Circuit Court criminal and paternity/non-support cases. Montgomery County’s Circuit Court civil cases are on JIS as a distinct database. The Circuit Court of Prince George’s County maintains a separate database not on JIS but with similar information.

Each JIS court database has its own search interface. Each provides docket content in categories of information unique to that court. For example, the JIS District Court criminal database provides four categories of docket information: Event Information, Name/Address Information, Charge Disposition Information, and Accounts Receivable Information.

All JIS court databases can be searched by case number and party name, in addition to each court’s unique search options. A District Court criminal case, for example, can be searched by case number, party name, or docket date.

The search option you select depends on the information you know about the case. Searching by case number will return all of the content available in JIS. Get the case number when you search by the court database’s other search options; in the example given, search by docket date or party name. A search by docket date retrieves a list of the trial caseload scheduled on that date. A search by party name returns both the event history and the charge disposition information.

Each court database’s unique content categories and search options, along with detailed search instructions, are described in the JIS Users Guide, available online at: www.courts.state.md.us/jisusersguide04.pdf.

How to Search Efficiently

JIS has more in-depth case record information than MDJCS, but the web-based MDJCS offers easier access and a richer windows-based search interface.

To locate case docket sheets in the most efficient way, find their case numbers in MDJCS before dialing up to JIS. The case number is the gateway to all of the docket sheets in JIS.

A common search is by attorney name. Start with a search in MDJCS by attorney to get a list of his/her cases, and case numbers. The case numbers can then be plugged into JIS one at a time to pull up the additional case docket sheets available only in JIS.

To see how this works, first follow the “search by attorney” example in the above section on MDJCS to get a list of attorney Michael Millemann’s cases. Then, plug one of Millemann’s cases, case number 1B01496167, into JIS District Court criminal to retrieve all content available in its docket.

Neither of these databases should be confused with the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS), which provides restricted information to the criminal justice community and authorized users on select events such as arrests, case dispositions, releases from prison, and fingerprints. Differences between CJIS and JIS are listed in a Subcommittee on Technological Aspects of JIS and CJIS Databases report available online at: www.courts.state.md.us/access/jis-cjis.pdf.

Eventually, MDJCS is slated to replace JIS and make it easier and simpler to search trial-level court records. For now, with strategic searching, the two databases complement each other.
Search Engines. I’ve often gone to this site when I don’t know how to approach an issue such as how to assemble a presentation about our collection. Law Technology News has rated it one of the “Ten Best Sites of the Decade.” It is written by a law librarian and updated monthly. You can even subscribe to an e-newsletter detailing the new updates to the site.

Now I’d like to know what you do to stay ahead of the pack. This will be a regular column in LLAM News so we can share our knowledge and all reap the benefits. I hope you’ll consider letting me know about new features and techniques that you find helpful, whether it is a new database subscription or just a new search technique to find that one elusive piece of information. Please contact me at DAJohnson@HHLAW.com. I look forward to hearing from you and including your ideas in future columns!

**Learning the Law With Chester the Crab**

By Jenny Smith
Research Librarian
University of Maryland School of Law

The Maryland Judiciary's Committee on Public Awareness has adapted a pair of educational electronic resources created by the Circuit Judges of Lake County, Illinois, to introduce kids to the legal system. The coloring books *Learning the Law* and *Learning More About the Law* provide lawyers, counselors, teachers, parents, caregivers, and others who work with children an accessible, enjoyable way to teach the basics about the law and the judicial branch of government. The coloring books were first distributed in Maryland by a judge to children being adopted on National Adoption Day.

Chester the Chesapeake Bay crab is the endearing cartoon guide in the books who uses activity games to show how the law works to protect people from accidents, from crime, and in disputes. Kids can read along as Chester points out Maryland’s capital on a map, and shows how to match the people in a courtroom with their roles. Readers and pre-readers alike can print the books and color in pictures of traffic signs, attorneys, judges, a court house, and even a law library with shelves of law books, a globe, and a "No Talking" sign! (The librarian and computer are probably somewhere nearby.)

The free materials, drawn to look like cartoon law books, are designed for third grade kids and younger, and, as part of the Judiciary's educational outreach program, are available to the public in PDF format at: [http://www.courts.state.md.us/publications/coloringbooks/](http://www.courts.state.md.us/publications/coloringbooks/).
Here are some suggested titles in response to my asking for books about librarians and libraries. Jenny Smith sent in suggestions in the Science Fiction, Comedy, and Mystery areas. The Time Traveler’s Wife by Audrey Niffenegger is a postmodern science fiction love story featuring a hip “guy-brarian” who meets and falls in love with a woman who has known him all her life (previously reviewed in the October LLAM News.) There are rumors that this story might make it to the big screen. Mix humor, Jane Austin, and librarians to get An Unsuitable Attachment, written by Barbara Pym in 1963 and published posthumously. The story takes place in a London parish inhabited by charming characters, including one librarian who takes a liking to a young man there. For a nostalgic read, try Charles Goodrum’s Dewey Decimated. The premier librarian-sleuth is introduced in this classic whodunit, the first of three Werner-Bok Library Mysteries. An elderly librarian, a young paraprofessional, and a graduate student historian investigate clues to discover who is trying to kill off the staff and who is questioning the authenticity of the rare books of a fictional Washington, D.C. library. An added bonus of the series for library history and technology buffs is that it provides a snapshot of a time when libraries were just beginning to embrace computers.

I have couple of unusual books to recommend. The Grand Complication by Allen Kurzweil features Alexander Short, a New York Public Library reference librarian, who comes to the aid of a bibliophile searching for information about the contents of an eighteenth-century cabinet. I especially liked the description of working in a large bureaucratic library; this and a game of identifying the correct call number in esoteric subject areas are worth the price of the book. A novel I haven’t yet read is The Librarian by Larry Beinhart (author of American Hero, the novel which became the film Wag the Dog.) The reviews describe this as a book that takes the worst-case scenario conceived by conspiracy theorists and runs rampant. An evil think tank controls the president and of course has a plan for world domination. Naturally this calls for a mild-mannered librarian and his colleagues to form a “Mission Impossible”-like squad to rescue the world.

Back in the real world with real heroes and heroines, Joan Bellisti recommended the children’s book by Jeanette Winter, The Librarian of Basra. This heroine, Alia Muhammad Baker, chief librarian of Basra’s Central Library, and friends, removed more than 30,000 volumes from the library and eventually stored them in their homes, preventing the collection’s destruction during the recent war. The illustrations are done in a bright folk-art style.

Joanne Dugan sent in this review:
Vampires and librarians – what a combination! I love the first group in fiction, and I love the second group in real life, so I was tickled when I learned that Elizabeth Kostova’s first novel, The Historian, prominently features both. You may remember that the book was published to great fanfare this spring. It’s a bit intimidating at 642 pages, but in fact it’s a pretty quick read. And where else are you going to find a New York Times best-
seller with a character known only as “the evil librarian”? The Historian follows three generations of scholars as they seek clues to the infamous Vlad the Impaler of Dracula fame. Each character’s quest begins with the discovery of a mysterious book, blank but for a woodcut of a dragon. Their research leads them to several famous and not-so-famous libraries. The scenes in the libraries show the author’s true love of research and the thrill of discovering hidden gems in the stacks. (This is in marked contrast to the library scene in Dan Brown’s The Da Vinci Code. Among the many slapstick scenes in that book is one where the hero gets trapped in the rare books room of the Vatican Library, surrounded by millions of dollars worth of precious and rare tomes. As I recall, he escaped when the bookcases were toppled domino-style until they crashed through the bullet-proof glass that surrounded the room. Another book that has a great discovery scene in a library is Louis Erdrich and Michael Dorris’s Crown of Columbus. In that book, the protagonists are led to the title artifact after stumbling across a map that had fallen behind a row of books in the stacks. This situation rings true to anyone who has ever shifted books in a library. No doubt it had been declared lost and some hapless undergraduate had to pay a fine before being allowed to graduate!) In any event, in The Historian it eventually becomes clear that while the researchers are hunting Dracula, he is in turn hunting them. I won’t reveal Vlad’s nefarious plan for the scholars, except to note that the old boy has a fine appreciation of technical services.

In an interview on amazon.com, the author explains why librarians are so important to her:

Why do the librarians in your book come across so vividly?

The librarians in the book are very important to me, although they’re secondary characters. This is partly because I revere libraries, which to me are one of the foundations of civilization and which I think deserve everyone’s attention and support. The other reason—connected to the first—is more personal, and that’s the fact that I come from a family of librarians (as well as professors). My mother, a retired librarian and one of my most valued readers, gives me a humorous hard time about the bad fate of some of the librarians in the book. I always explain to her that they’re endangered because they’re so close to the source of learning—a great thing when the learning is constructive, but risky in the Dracula business.

Lest you fear that the popularity of this book is going to hurt the image of the profession, you’ll be happy to note that “evil librarian” is listed by Amazon as a “statistically improbable phrase.”

Happy reading! Send your suggestions for summer reading (for the June issue of LLAM News) to Janet Camillo.

Did you know…..

Minutes of the LLAM Executive board meetings are now available on the LLAM Web page at

http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/llam/Boardminutes.htm
Are you sure nothing important slipped through?

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rounded by her family.

Caroline began her career with West in 1986 as an account representative in Maryland. Over the years, she held several management positions supporting librarians and was an active member of LLSDC and LLAM. Caroline’s consistent hard work and dedication to her customers developed many dear friendships throughout her successful career.

Caroline was known for her strong customer dedication and for her advocacy for librarians to the West organization. A DC librarian recently commented that "all West reps should aspire to Caroline's diligence and management approach." Caroline definitely made an impact on many of us during her 20 years at West.

We will miss her spirited approach to business and life in general, especially her warm sense of humor.

There was a Memorial Ceremony on March 4, 2006, in Colorado. LLAM joins with all our colleagues in expressing our fond recollections of Caroline and our sorrow at her passing.

We also regret to pass along the sad news of the death of Danelle Lee Rossi, who many LLAM members knew through her affiliation with Thomson West. Danelle died suddenly at her home in Bethesda, Maryland, on Sunday, March 12, 2006. Born in Norristown, Pennsylvania, Danelle was a graduate of Archbishop Carroll High School and of the University of Pittsburgh with a B.A. in psychology. She received her J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh Law School. A funeral Mass was held at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Bridgeport, Pennsylvania, in March 16.

All members are welcome to send professional or personal news for inclusion in the next edition of LLAM News. Please send your items to Susan Herrick at sherrick@law.umaryland.edu.
This column highlights interesting reference questions received by our members. Please send any reference transactions you’d like to see included in this column to jsinder@law.umaryland.edu.

Question: How can one easily compile information about federal judges – specifically, the political parties of judges currently serving on each of the United States Courts of Appeals?

Answer: This question, from a professor interested in the political composition of each of the United States Courts of Appeals, led me to a wonderful database on federal judges created by the Federal Judicial Center. The database is under the section of the FJC site related to Biographical Information on Federal Judges, and in addition to providing the basic biographical information, the database allows you to search that information in myriad ways.

There are two ways to reach the FJC database. You can go directly to the database website at: http://www.fjc.gov/history/home.nsf/autoframe?openform&top=/history/home.nsf/page/judgesitecontent&nav=/history/home.nsf/page/judges_nav&page=/history/home.nsf/page/searchcriteria or, if you don’t have the direct link, go to the main Federal Judicial Center page, http://www.fjc.gov, choose Federal Judicial History, then Biographical Directory of Federal Judges, and on that page click on the link to the Federal Judges Biographical Database.

According to the database description, “Each biographical entry includes the judge’s full name; birth and death dates; places of birth and death, when available; race or ethnicity (determined, whenever possible, by judge’s self-definition); and gender. Within the entry, the record for each federal court on which a judge served begins with the date of nomination and the nominating president. Recess appointments are also noted. The record indicates the preceding judge or the statute authorizing a new judicial appointment. The dates of the Senate confirmation and the commission follow.” Termination dates and reasons for termination (e.g., retirement, move to another court) are also included.

Once you enter the database, you can choose search criteria. For example, to find out the current political composition of the Courts of Appeals, I chose “Party of Nominating President,” “Court,” and “Limit Query to Sitting Judges”. This last designation limits your search to either active judges or judges with senior status, or both. After choosing the criteria, you can run your search by choosing the Party of Nominating Presidents (Republican or Democrat – although as the database goes back to 1789, Whig, Federalist and Jeffersonian Republican are also on the list), and choose to search each Court of Appeals individually. Be careful when choosing a court, as the old Circuit Courts are also listed and will not give you the results you want if you are interested in the current Courts of Appeals. For each search you will retrieve a list of judges, and each judge’s name links to the biographical entry for that judge for more information.

If you need a more detailed result, it’s possible to search by the nominating president instead of by political party. You can also search by gender, race/ethnicity, dates of nomination and termination or date of retirement from active service. Using some of these criteria, I was able not only to compile the political make-up of the current Courts of Appeals (assuming that the party of the nominating president indicates the party of the nominee), but also to compile this same data for various dates in history; e.g., the date when F.D.R. became President.

Is this same information available for Maryland judges? In a word (well, two words), not really. Current judges on the Court of Appeals and Court of Special Appeals are included in the Maryland Manual, which has been published since 1885. For historical information you would need to look at older copies of the Manual. There are other sources for biographical information on state judges, for example, the book The American Bench, and some biographical information can be found in files held by Maryland libraries (the State Law Library has a clipping file that may be helpful), but there is nothing really comparable to the Federal Judicial Center database. Perhaps a project waiting to be begun?
Ten (+1) Great Places to Visit in St. Louis

By Susan Tulis
Associate Dean for Information Services
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

St. Louis is such a vibrant and interesting city that although my husband and I live 100 miles away, we frequently drive those miles just to spend the day there. So based on many fun-filled day trips to St. Louis, here is a list of great places to visit when you come to St. Louis in July for the centennial meeting of AALL!

1. Missouri Botanical Garden (4344 Shaw Blvd.) - Founded in 1859, the country’s oldest botanical park features 79 acres of gorgeous display gardens and historic structures, including the Climatron® rain forest conservatory, authentic Japanese garden, center for home gardening, and founder Henry Shaw’s Victorian country home. www.mobot.org

2. Forest Park (Bounded by I-64, Kingshighway, Lindell & Skinker) - One of the largest urban parks in the United States, at 1,371 acres, it is approximately 500 acres larger than Central Park in New York City. In 1904, the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, the greatest of the World’s Fairs, drew more than 19 million visitors from around the world to Forest Park. Today it contains the Art Museum, Science Center, Zoo, Jewel Box greenhouse, History Museum, the Muny theatre, 7.5-mile biking, jogging and skating path, skating rink, and lakes. stlouis.missouri.org/citygov/parks/forestpark/

3. Delmar/U City – Includes the St. Louis Walk of Fame (110 stars and informative plaques honoring famous St. Louisans set in the sidewalks of The Loop) and Blueberry Hill restaurant (a St. Louis landmark filled with pop culture memorabilia, photo booth, and live music. Famous for hamburgers, jerk chicken, trout almandine, vegetarian specials, soups and salads. My husband’s favorite place to visit is Vintage Vinyl – “America's largest collection of new/used CDs, LPs, DVDs.” Rolling Stone called it "one of America's 10 Best Record Stores." www.cityloop.com


5. The Hill (From downtown St. Louis, take I-64/40 west to Kingshighway south and turn west on Shaw) – Settled in the early 1900s by Italian immigrants, this lively neighborhood is just minutes from downtown. Even the neighborhood’s fireplugs are painted green, white, and red in tribute to the tri-color of Italy. Baseball personalities Yogi Berra, Joe Garagiola, and Jack Buck grew up on The Hill’s Elizabeth Avenue, which now bears the name “Hall of Fame Place” in their honor. One of the top “Little Italy” neighborhoods in the country with exquisite Northern Italian cuisine. While you’re visiting the neighborhood’s restaurants, make sure to visit specialty stores that sell everything Italian or learn how to play a game of bocce—Italian lawn bowling. www.shopthehill.com

6. Butterfly House (Faust Park, 15193 Olive Blvd., Chesterfield) – A cultural and educational attraction, visitors can see thousands of butterflies in free flight and actually witness the mystery of metamorphosis. www.butterflyhouse.org

7. The Arch (St. Louis Riverfront) - The Gateway Arch Riverfront, highlighted by the majestic Gateway Arch, attracts more than four million guests each year. At 630 ft., our nation's tallest manmade monument has plenty of exciting activities. Take the tram ride to the top, see a documentary film, experience a giant screen movie, visit the Lewis & Clark exhibit in the museum and go shopping. http://www.nps.gov/jeff/ and www.gatewayarch.com


9. International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame, Home of the St. Louis Cardinals Hall of Fame Museum (Across from Busch Stadium) - Two great sports museums in one place for one price. Five thousand years of bowling history, more than a century of St. Louis baseball and four free frames of bowling. www.bowlingmuseum.com

10. Trader Joe’s (48 Brentwood Promenade Court) – Yes, those of you who know and love Trader Joe’s won’t miss a beat when you visit St. Louis with its 3 locations. www.traderjoes.com

11. Ted Drewes Frozen Custard (Old Rte. 66, 6726 Chippewa) - A St. Louis tradition on Old Route 66 since 1929. Known for specialty “concrete” shakes, so thick you can turn them upside down. www.teddrewes.com
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Differences that matter.
Requesting Submissions for LLAM Newsletter

The LLAM Newsletter Committee welcomes submissions from LLAM members on a variety of engaging topics, including but not limited to legal research tips, member news, and local events. Submit your contribution by May 15 for inclusion in the June 2006 issue!

LLAM News is a quarterly publication of the Law Library Association of Maryland, a chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries. LLAM members are the most important part of this newsletter. The articles appearing herein are by us and for us. We encourage all members to submit articles to LLAM News. Please share your experiences and your insights into our profession. The editors will be glad to assist with the process of bringing your ideas to print. Send articles, letters to the editor, news updates, advertising inquiries, photographs, comments, and suggestions to the Newsletter Committee Chair Susan Herrick, preferably via e-mail. Photographs and print-only materials are also welcome by post mail.

**Deadline Issue**

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www.aallnet.org/chapter/llam/