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The College of William and Mary
Marshall-Wythe Law Library

Volume 5, Number 6

April, 1994

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Recently the library conducted a student survey addressing library services and issues. A frequent comment from those responding was a desire to learn how to access the information available on the library's CD-ROM network. To fulfill this request, prior to both the examination period and the beginning of summer employment, librarians will be available in the Reference Area on April 12, 13 and 14 to demonstrate the various CD-ROM databases. Demonstrations will take approximately 30 minutes and begin on the half hour. Students may stay for part of a demonstration or the entire presentation. Since many law firms are subscribing to CD-ROM products, we hope a number of you will take this opportunity to learn about the information available on our CD-ROM network.

Tuesday, April 12
2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
CIS Congressional Masterfile

Wednesday, April 13
2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Matthew Bender CD-ROM Libraries

WilsonDisc (Wilson Business Abstracts,
Index to Legal Periodicals and
Social Science Index)

Thursday, April 14
2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
CCH Standard Federal Tax Reports
Virginia Law on Disc

...MR

IN BRIEF

Extended Library Hours During Exams. Beginning Friday, April 15, and extending through the examination period (Sunday, May 8) law students may remain in the building until 2:30 a.m. ...MR

Exam Period Typing Carrel Usage. There are six typing carrels which students may use for study purposes. A sign-up schedule for these carrels is available at the circulation desk. Typing carrels and the two Student Conference/Video Viewing Rooms (rooms 244 & 245) may NOT be used for taking exams. ...AF

Library Lockers. THE DEADLINE FOR LOCKER CLEAN-OUT AND KEY RETURN IS MONDAY, MAY 9, 1994, BY 5:00 P.M. Lockers must be emptied and the locker key returned (with barcode and key tag attached) to the circulation desk. To continue using your locker during the summer session, you may fill out a locker renewal form in lieu of returning the key. Return the completed form to the circulation desk by the May 9 deadline to renew the locker. There is a \$10.00 replacement charge for keys not returned.

Lockers will be available for the Summer Session as keys are returned from the Spring

Semester. Any law student who needs a locker for the summer can obtain a key at the circulation desk. ALL LOCKER KEYS MUST BE RETURNED AT THE END OF THE SUMMER SESSION FOR REASSIGNMENT ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS ON THE FIRST DAY OF FALL SEMESTER CLASSES. ...AF

"TOP TEN LIST" OF INFORMATION SOURCES FOR NEW LAW FIRM ASSOCIATES

The Law Library just obtained an advance copy to this week's Top Ten List from the CBS Late Night Show. Coinciding with the upcoming National Library Week, the list deals with important legal research sources. This particular list is also timely in that many of you can use the information in your summer employment. If you become familiar with these items and remember to use them you can pass yourself off as someone who knows their way around a library. So, direct from the home office, the Top Ten List of Information Sources for New Law Firm Associates:

Number 10: Bieber's Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations, 4th ed., by Mary Miles Prince. Buffalo, NY: William S. Hein & Co., Inc., 1993.

Do not ask a partner what F.R.D. means. They may not know, and more to the point, they now know you don't know. Use Bieber's to look up abbreviations to over 30,000 legal abbreviations.

Number 9: Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

Our federal government is one of the largest "publishers" in the world. GPO is the primary government information reproducer and distributor. The Monthly Catalog is basically a "trade" bibliography listing publications of the

various agencies of the federal government. It is also available on WESTLAW/DIALOG in the GPO-CTLG database.

Number 8: State Legislative Sourcebook, 1994 : A Resource Guide to Legislative Information in the Fifty States, by Lynn Hellebust. Topeka, KA: Government Research Service, 1993.

Impress your partners by learning the ins and outs of your state legislature. This source describes legislative information available for each state and where to get it, who the legislative players are, and state legislative procedures.

Number 7: The Congressional Yellowbook, The Federal Yellowbook, The State Yellowbook, and The Municipal Yellowbook. New York, Washington, DC: Monitor Leadership Directories, Inc.

Learn the principle that one phone call can save hours of research time and the client hundreds of dollars. The key is to find someone who can tell you what you need to know or direct you to a source of compiled information. The "Yellowbook" series of directories is a current and comprehensive who's who in the executive and legislative branches of the federal, state, and local governments. You may want to ask your librarian about other useful directories.

Number 6: Encyclopedia of Legal Information Sources, (ELIS) 2d ed., Detroit: Gale Research Inc., 1992.

If your assigning lawyer is unable to provide guidance on where to start your research, you will want to consult a research guide. There are research guides that describe research sources in all areas of knowledge, including legal research. ELIS is a comprehensive reference source, including 480 different topics. Under each heading, citations include twenty different types of sources, such as looseleaf services,

handbooks and manuals, treatises, bibliographies, associations, and online databases. Ask a librarian about jurisdictional and other topical research guides.

Number 5: Infotrac and WilsonDisc

Did you know that periodical literature fits into the category of "already compiled information"? For example, when a law review author comments on the background and effect of a newly enacted piece of legislation, they often include references to legislative history documents. Or, when writing about the economic or sociological impact of a judicial opinion, an author may include references to statistical studies.

The importance of periodical literature is not limited to legal periodicals. Proving a doctor should have realized the side effects of a drug can be done by researching articles about the drug in medical literature. Information about a local person or corporation often is found in the local newspaper. Locating information in periodical literature requires the use of print or computerized periodical indexes. Remember that you can search the full text of many periodical articles on LEXIS or WESTLAW.

Number 4: Law Firm Brief, Memo and Form Banks

Flatter a partner by commenting on their work product. How do you get a copy of their work product without sneaking into their files after hours? Check the firm's automated work product retrieval system.

Work product systems are a law firm's way of capturing the written work of its lawyers for future reference. In today's law firms, automated systems are used to index and retrieve the attorneys' work product. Generally, they serve three functions: To avoid reinventing the wheel; to identify inconsistent positions; and to produce quality work. When you get to your firm, be sure to ask how to search it's system.

Number 3: The Fiscal Directory of Fee-Based Information Services in Libraries. Norwalk, CA: FYI/County of Los Angeles Public Library, 1990 - . (FISCAL Directory) The Burwell Directory of Information Brokers, Houston: Burwell Enterprises, 1992. (Burwell Directory)

When you need information for a project **RIGHT NOW**, you may need the assistance of an information broker or fee-based research service to quickly provide both complete and accurate information. The service may be costly, but often is justified in light of the research project. The two directories above will help you locate an information broker when necessary.

Number 2: LEXIS/NEXIS and WESTLAW/DIALOG

You all know that LEXIS and WESTLAW can find the text of cases and statutes. And you can print them all out on the firm's laser printer and take all of your dual-column pages to your office. Right? Well, that's one way to end a bright legal career.

First, spend time with the law librarian, the LEXIS and WESTLAW representatives and the database guides to learn the best use of both systems. Always know how online sources fit into your research strategy and plan your search before you go online.

AND (Drum roll please, Paul) the Number 1 Information Resource for New Associates is -- A LAW LIBRARIAN.

In 1982 John Naisbitt in his book Megatrends (New York: Warner Books, 1982) coined the term "The Information Age" to identify our stage of social and cultural development. Now, the terms "information super highway", "national research & education network", "electronic books", and "virtual libraries" have entered our everyday language. Where once we had "research libraries" we now have "research networks." Today you can log into a library's

catalog on the Internet, send an email request, and have the document scanned and electronically transmitted to your office.

The amount of information is growing exponentially and the technology used to access it is becoming more complex. A librarian, trained in the science of information management, is the best resource to help you pull together all your available research options and sort out the complexities of information access.

If your firm has its own law librarian consult them immediately when handed a research project. They will be able to steer you through the firm's work product retrieval system and automated library system. They can provide additional LEXIS and WESTLAW training and give you search tips and strategies to help keep your online costs down. The firm librarian will probably have experience with special collections in other local libraries and will know of information brokers who have the expertise to help you with your research problem.

If your firm doesn't have a librarian, ask other associates, partners, or legal assistants about local librarians they have found helpful.

As you walk out the doors of Marshall-Wythe and into new endeavors, remember that the M-W law librarians provide numerous services for both our students during their summer employment and our alumnae. So, if you need to deal with a familiar information specialist, give us a call at our Reference Number (804) 221-3257.

...MGH

FEATURE FILMS ON VIDEO

The Law Library has a videotape collection of over 80 feature films that focus on the legal field or lawyers. All of the videos are in VHS format and are available to law school faculty, students, and staff for a 24-hour loan

period. The videos are kept on reserve and may be checked out at the circulation desk.

An updated annotated list of films is located at the circulation desk. Each description includes the rating, length, cast, plot and call number. LION (the online catalog) may also be searched by title to determine whether the library owns a particular video.

Rooms 244 and 245 on the top floor of the library are equipped with VCRs and monitors for patrons' viewing needs. Rooms may be reserved at the circulation desk for up to two hours. Of course, patrons may take videos home for viewing in a more comfortable setting.

Some of the recent acquisitions include Class Action, The Silence of the Lambs, and True Colors. Classics, such as To Kill a Mockingbird, Anatomy of a Murder, and Cape Fear, are also available for your viewing pleasure. So, take a break from studying and check out a video!

...ST

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