

# Douglas County Law Library

## E-Mail Newsletter



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### **Eight Reasons Solo Lawyers Should Use Law Libraries**

by Mary Whisner

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(This article was originally published on LLRX.com on May 20, 2006. The URL of the article there is <http://www.llrx.com/extras/shorttakes12.htm>. It is reprinted here by permission of the author and the publisher.)

(Note: The Newsletter editor has taken the liberty of adding commentary [in brackets] to the text that is specific to the Douglas County Law Library.)

### One: Librarians

Libraries employ people whose job is to help you use the library and figure out your research puzzles. Law librarians specialize in legal materials and the needs of legal researchers. Many are legally trained. We keep up with new sources and techniques and can often save you hours in your research. What's more important to you than your time?

Librarians also create online guides to help you with your research. See my library's collection of guides, for instance. So we can help you with your research without ever meeting you – even at 2:00 a.m., if that's when you're looking for some research pointers. [On-line guides are a future project of the DCLL.]

### Two: Books

You've got a limited budget and limited office space, so you don't buy every practice manual, loose-leaf service, formbook, or treatise that might come in handy. Your local law library is a great resource. (If you

find the book or set is really useful, then you can order it for your office collection.) [The DCLL's space for print materials is limited, so our emphasis is electronic, mainly on-line, resources.]

Even if you are very comfortable using online research, some sources are easier to use in print. Many people find it helpful to use annotated codes in print because of their layout. Sometimes you might use a database to find a source, but sit down with the print when it comes time to skim the whole chapter you need.

And remember that not everything is online (and certainly not everything is online free!).

### Three: Databases

Many public law libraries subscribe to databases that lawyers and often members of the public can use free. Say you subscribe to a thrifty Westlaw or LexisNexis package that gives you access to your own state's laws and cases. When you need to research some other state's law, wouldn't it be great to be able to use the law library's subscription? [The DCLL provides on-line Lexis access.]

- Some law libraries make databases available without charge. [All DCLL resources are available for use free of charge.]
- Others charge on a cost-recovery basis. (Usually that's still a lot cheaper than getting your own subscription for occasional use.)

Some of the databases popular with the lawyers who use the law school library where I work are [None of these are currently available in the DCLL]:

- LegalTrac, an index of legal periodical articles, 1980-present.

- Hein Online, a collection of PDF documents from a variety of sources. It includes hundreds of law journals (from the nineteenth century on!), Statutes at Large, the Federal Register, treaties, and federal legislative histories.
- KeyCite, the component of Westlaw that enables researchers to check the history of a case, statute, or other document and find citing references.
- RIA CheckPoint, a rich source of tax and accounting material.
- BNA, a wide range of newsletters and databases, including BNA publications in tax, labor, and health.

Nonlegal databases. Ever need economics, business, scientific, or medical information? The law library might have access. If not, your public library or local university library is a great source for nonlegal information.

You can test drive databases before you decide to subscribe.

### Four: Audiovisual materials

- Want a DVD on cross-examination? How about an audiobook to review a subject while you're in your car? Many law libraries have them.
- Some law libraries (e.g., the State Law Library of Montana) maintain collections of AV materials you can use for CLE credit.

[Providing such CLE material is currently under consideration by the DCLL.]

### Five: Space

- One attraction of solo practice is getting to work in your own special space and wear your bathrobe while you're drafting motions. But what if you want a change of scenery? The law library provides you with a fresh place to work – and maybe a fresh outlook.

- Many county law libraries also have conference rooms that you can reserve for meetings with clients or colleagues. Pretty neat if you don't want them to see your ironing board and that lunatic cat in your home office. [Space in the DCLL can be made available with prior scheduling.]
- Location, location, location. Most county law libraries are right in the courthouse. What a great place to gather your thoughts before you argue your motion. [The DCLL is on the main floor of the JLE Center.]

#### Six: Networking

- When you're in a firm or a government agency, you often pick up a lot at the water cooler. You can bounce ideas off your colleagues and hear what projects they're involved with. That's a little harder for solo practitioners. But at the law library, you'll run into law school classmates, former coworkers, and other acquaintances in the legal community.
- Who knows? The contacts you keep up might even lead to referrals for you.

#### Seven: Services at a Distance [Not currently available from the DCLL.]

- Law libraries also offer other services when you're away from the library, such as telephone or email reference (or even instant messaging reference). The law library can help you even when you're in your office or on the road.
- Many law libraries offer a document delivery service, and can send you copies of material for a fee. If it would take an hour of your time to drive here to get the document, it's a bargain to pay \$20 to have it faxed to you.

#### Eight: Training

- Many law libraries offer training, sometimes with CLE credits.
- For instance, the King County Law Library offers classes on Casemaker, Loislaw, LexisNexis, Westlaw, Word, using the Internet for legal research, skip tracing, and more. [The DCLL offers training to attorneys as part of its education and outreach program. Past offerings have been Internet research and Lexis training. Future offerings will include *Kansas Child Support Calculator* and *Bradley Parenting Time Calculator* software training.]

#### Where do you go?

- Many counties have county law libraries whose mission is to serve the public and the bar. Generally, the bigger cities have bigger libraries with bigger staffs and more services. [Douglas County has the DCLL.]
- Each state has a state law library (serving state agencies and courts, but often serving attorneys in the state as well).
- Some federal court law libraries are open to attorneys or the public as a courtesy of the judges.
- Some law school libraries (like mine) are open to the public.
- Some law school libraries are open to attorneys or alumni of the school, sometimes for a membership fee.
- Some cities are served by members-only ("subscription") law libraries, such as the Social Law Library in Boston.

Follow the librarian credo: Just ask! You might be surprised what the public law library can do for you!

By the way, public law libraries welcome your support, financial and otherwise. If you benefit from your local law library, consider making a donation. If you decide to weed

your shelves of some CLE materials and handbooks, make a call to see if the law library could use them. [Please be sure to contact the DCLL first before bringing in any unsolicited material.]

### **Free Help With Research Offered**

The Law Library has been contacted by an individual who is offering to perform Internet and other research for local attorneys on a voluntary basis, free of charge. He has extensive experience with research in a wide variety of fields and desires to utilize these skills to help others. If you are interested in taking advantage of this offer, please contact the Library.

### **Improved Access to Criminal Forms**

Access to the *Complete Manual of Criminal Forms, 3d* in electronic format, by F. Lee Bailey and Kenneth J. Fishman, published by Thomsom West, has recently been improved for Law Library users. The title has been available for use on Workstation 2 since the beginning of this year, but had been difficult to find and use. That has been corrected by reworking the shortcut to the material from the workstation's desktop and by the addition of instructions on how to use the manual.



Look for this new and improved icon labeled "Legal Forms" the next time you use Workstation 2, and be sure to follow it to the *Complete Manual of Criminal Forms, 3d*.

### ***The Caine Mutiny* screening in November**

The Library's Reels of Justice Film Series continues with a screening of *The Caine Mutiny* at 6:00 PM on Friday, November 17, 2006, in the Lawrence Public Library Auditorium. Local attorney John Bodle will provide commentary on the film's portrayal

of the military justice system utilizing his experience serving as a Judge Advocate General for the United States Air Force.

### **Current Art Gallery Exhibition**

The September exhibits in the Douglas County Law Library Art Gallery and the Division IV Art Gallery are of photography by Ron Beeton.

The exhibits will run through the end of September. All of the pieces are for sale and may be purchased directly from the artist. Contact information for Mr. Beeton is available in the Library and through a link to his website from the Art Gallery page on the Law Library's website.

The October 2006 exhibitions will feature photography by Joe Sutcliffe. More information on the exhibits will be in the October E-Mail Newsletter.

For more information on past, current, and future Art Gallery exhibitions, or for more information on the Art Gallery, please consult the Art Gallery page on the Law Library's website.

If you would like to exhibit your art in our gallery, or know of local artists who would like to show their original art here, contact Bill Pendleton, the Library's Art Gallery Exhibitions Coordinator at 843-3536 ext. 19 or [billpen@pendletonandsutton.com](mailto:billpen@pendletonandsutton.com), or the Law Library at 838-2477 or by e-mail at [info@douglascolawlibrary.org](mailto:info@douglascolawlibrary.org).

### **New Acquisitions**

Newly acquired material added to the Law Library's holdings:

Child Welfare Law and Practice: Representing Children, Parents, and State Agencies in Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency

Cases, by Martin Ventrell and Donald N. Duquette.

Complete Manual of Criminal Forms, 3d, 2006 CD-ROM ed. Located on Library Workstation 2.

Drug Court Review, v. 5:1-v. 5:2.

Internet guide for the legal researcher newsletter, v. 1:5 (Sept./Oct. 2006).

Kansas Judicial Council probate forms, 2d, 2006 supplement.

Kansas Sentencing Guidelines, Desk Reference Manual, 2006.

Lawyer's Guide to Kansas Evidence. 4<sup>th</sup> ed., 2006 Pocket Part.

Lawrence attorney William B. Pendleton, Esq., has donated a book to the Douglas County Law Library in honor of Judge Michael J. Malone of the District Court of Douglas County, Division IV. Now occupying library shelf space is *Winning With Stories: Using the Narrative to Persuade in Trials, Speeches & Lectures*, by noted Texas attorney Jim M. Perdue. Published by the State of Texas in spring 2006, *Winning With Stories* emphasizes the fundamental role of storytelling in persuading audiences of all kinds, and is an invaluable resource for any attorney seeking to develop and improve persuasive skills, particularly in the courtroom. The book is donated to the Library in honor of Judge Malone's more than 33 years of service to the Kansas bar and bench. Accompanying the book is a 2 DVD set of a State Bar of Texas CLE presentation of *Winning With Stories* by the author on May 19, 2006, including an author interview conducted by State Bar board member Michael Black of Houston, Texas.

Jim Perdue is also the author of *I Remember Atticus: Inspiring Stories Every Trial Lawyer Should Know* (2004) (also being donated to the Douglas County Law Library) and *Who Will Speak for the Victim? A Practical Treatise on Plaintiff's Jury Argument* (1989), both published by the State Bar of Texas and edited and produced by Michael Ambrose of the Texas State Bar book publishing division. Michael is Bill Pendleton's son-in-law; Bill's daughter Hendle is the author of the young-adult novel *Dove Dream* (Houghton Mifflin, 1994).

Editor's note: The preceding was supplied by Bill Pendleton. Mr. Pendleton has been the volunteer Douglas County Law Library Art Gallery Coordinator since the gallery was organized in early 2004, and has been recruiting exhibitors and coordinating exhibits every month since its opening in May of 2004. The Library would like to thank Bill, not only for the above-mentioned donations, but also for his significant contribution to the success of the Library's Art Gallery.

### **Did You Know?**

Every other week, a bit of Law Library trivia is posted in the Law Library and on the Law Library's website. The previous month's "Did You Know" tidbits are then published here in the Newsletter. The hope is for this to improve communication between the Law Library and its users.

September's entries were:

- The Law Library has a separate Internet Research Reference Collection shelved next to the workstations under the Library clock.
- The Law Library is sponsoring the "Reels of Justice" legal/courtroom themed film series.

## **This Month In Legal History**

The Newsletter is premiering a new feature this month that the Editor hopes will be both fun and instructive for readers. The intent is to include in each month's Newsletter an event from the history of law and jurisprudence of Douglas County that occurred during the month. Entries will also be posted on the Law Library's website.

Local legal history is not a particular strength of the Editor, so he is asking readers to submit material for publication in future issues. It can be profound, mundane, or somewhere in between. It can be from the 19th Century or from the 1990s. The only constraint being that the material has some bearing on the legal history of Douglas County.

This month's entry:

October 3, 1854 - President Franklin Pierce names Samuel Dexter Lecompte to be the first chief justice of the Kansas Territorial Supreme Court.

The town of Lecompton was named for this staunch proslavery Democrat whose tenure on the bench largely coincided with the "Bleeding Kansas" period. Detractors considered Lecompte a "drunken wretch" who "prostituted the judicial ermine to do the dirtiest work of the slave power." Others have seen Lecompte as a jurist who simply tried to interpret the laws as they were written by the duly constituted territorial legislature that enjoyed federal sanction.

Excerpted from:

<http://www.kansashistoryonline.org/ksh/ArticlePage.asp?artid=394>

## **Law Library Volunteer Opportunities**

The Library is looking for individuals to fill the following volunteer positions:

E-Mail Newsletter Editor.

Film Series Commentators

Patron Education and Training Assistant.

Publicity and Marketing Assistant.

Recycling Assistant

Reference Assistant.

Volunteer Coordinator.

Work Station Maintenance Assistant.

The Library also has opportunities for volunteers to create positions around their own interests and skills.

For more information and/or for position descriptions, contact the Library or visit the "Volunteers" page on the Law Library's website.

The Law Library Volunteer Program provides a capable and dependable voluntary work force to assist with the day-to-day operations of the Law Library and its special projects. This work force supplements the paid Library staff and allows the Library to provide the best possible service to local judges, attorneys, and the public.

The Volunteer Program is instrumental in linking a valuable community resource - the citizens - with a valuable community institution - the Douglas County Law Library - for the benefit, growth, and enrichment of both.

If you or someone you know might be interested in volunteering for one of them, or if you would like more information on our program and/or the positions we have open, please contact the Library or visit the

“Volunteers” page on the Law Library’s website.

### **Feedback**

This Newsletter is intended to be useful to its readers. As in any enterprise, feedback on how the Newsletter is fulfilling this goal is crucial to our achieving it. If our articles are helpful, let us know. If they are not, let us know. If you have suggestions on how to improve the Newsletter, please let us know. Thank you.

### **Submitting Articles for Newsletter**

The Editor encourages readers to submit articles for publication and/or make suggestions on material to be included in future issues of the Newsletter.

### **To Subscribe**

Contact the Law Library by mail, e-mail, or telephone and request a free subscription to the Newsletter. It will be sent to you as a PDF attachment to an e-mail. The Library’s mailing address is: Douglas County Law Library, Judicial and Law Enforcement Center, 111 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Lawrence, Kansas, 66044. The Library’s e-mail address is: [info@douglascolawlibrary.org](mailto:info@douglascolawlibrary.org). The Law Library’s telephone number is: 785-838-2477.

### **Classified Ads**

Free classified ads may be placed in the Newsletter by contacting the Law Library. The Editor reserves the right to refuse anything deemed inappropriate and to add restrictions as the need arises.

There are no classified ads this month.

#### **Douglas County Law Library E-Mail Newsletter**

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