



# LAW LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

*Legal Research Tools on the Internet: for Attorneys and Pro Se Litigants* 1, 4

*LCBA Grant Helps Purchase Additional Materials for Library's CLE Collection* 2

*Library Policies Now Posted on Website* 2

*2007 Webby Award for Best Law Website* 3

*Servicemembers Civil Relief Act—an overview* 3

*Chronology of Known Data Breaches on Web* 3

**Special points of interest:**

- \* *Librarian's Corner* 2
- \* New Book Notes 3
- \* Research Hint: - Finding Dockets, Court Rules and Court Forms on the Web 2
- \*

## LEGAL RESEARCH TOOLS ON THE INTERNET: FOR ATTORNEYS AND PRO SE LITIGANTS

Many of us who manage public law libraries like to point out the advantages of actually coming into our libraries with a legal question. For example, we provide free access to often very expensive, but specialized database services such as LEXIS or WESTLAW; we provide copies of helpful research tools and how-to manuals that are NOT available online. And finally, we actually have a real person (most of the time!) available to help you figure out how to actually use all of these research aids and tools!

However, when you CAN'T physically make it into your closest public law library facility, there are several online legal libraries available on the Internet that can be useful. While you can't find EVERYTHING on the web (for example, older case opinions for many states, such as Oregon), you can find other resources that might help you better understand your legal questions.

There are several "portal" websites, hosted by academic law libraries or non-profit groups, that offer access to other websites providing links to primary source material (i.e. statutes, administrative rules, and court opinions) as well as to other resources for legal information (i.e., self-help websites maintained by nonprofits, legal aid and by bar associations). There are also

websites that provide a wealth of information about available legal resources and questions. While some of these portal sites are available through our Law Library's web page, many of them should (or may not) be sources that are commonly used. These are "tools" in the sense that each provides multiple services and sources of information for users, whether you are an attorney, law student, judge or pro se litigant.

So here is a quick overview of some of the larger, most reliable (and well-maintained!) legal research tools now on the web!

**www.findlaw.com** This is a commercial site, now managed by Thomson/West, one of the largest legal publishers in the world. Its primary focus was originally to provide a portal site for attorneys who wanted easy (and free!) access to legal information that was available on government and other web sites. However, it has added an extensive list of services aimed at the non-lawyer user, providing links to articles and websites which explain common legal issues to members of the general public (simply select the "For the Public" tab on the main page of the web site.) Some of the information is rather cursory, and much it relies on other self-help websites, such as Nolo, but it is a good source for general information. There are also links to selected sources for legal forms, but most of these are NOT free and few are specific to Oregon, so this offering should be used with real caution.

**cont. on p. 4**



The **LAW LIBRARY NEWSLETTER** is usually published quarterly by the Lane County Law Library, 125 East 8th Avenue, Eugene, Oregon 97401. It is distributed free of charge to members of the Lane County Bar Association, library patrons and members of the public. For more information about the **NEWSLETTER**, or library hours and services, call (541) 682-4337. Law Librarian Linda Falken may be contacted at (541) 682-4113. ❖

## LIBRARIAN'S CORNER:

My recent collaboration on an article about "quick 10 tips on e-mail etiquette" got me to thinking about how much technology such as e-mail and cell phones have changed human behavior. Cell phones in particular have had an impact on interpersonal communication styles (sometimes good, sometimes not). I do own a cell phone, but mine is a "plain Jane" variety; it is rarely "on" (only if I am expecting a call or making one), and lacks all the of the current "basic" accessories. To the amusement of my more "in tune" friends, my cell phone does NOT have color coordinated covers (actually, I rather like "basic black"), customized ring tones (okay, it can be programmed for Beethoven's Fifth, but the vibrating mode is quite enough, thank you!), nor is it a digital camera (so I can send a picture of where I'm stranded on the freeway to the tow truck driver). Okay, I admit to being kinda retro-technic; I try not to introduce too much technology into my communication "style", whether through e-mail or cell phones. For me, face to face contact is the best way to "understand" someone else's message – body language, tone of voice, facial expressions, etc. It conveys more information and prevents future misunderstandings. So, another list:

### Rules about communicating with cell phones:

1) **Shouting does not equal "discretion"**. Remember the volume of your voice does NOT affect the quality of the sound on the other person's cell phone. If using your highest decibel level while arguing with your sister, or telling your best friend about a disgusting medical procedure, this does not improve the "bad reception" on the other person's phone. Keep your voice at a conversational level and always remember that those around you are NOT interested in your health, your family's issues, or even your current work crisis.

2) **Be brief and concise while on the phone** (also true for e-mail). Convey your information to the other person in a few sentences, or with a few questions and then graciously thank them and hang up! It is not necessary to use up all 1000 free minutes on your monthly plan on one call. (Think of trees instead of bigger cell towers!)

3) **Do not try to multi-task** when communicating, by combining other tasks requiring concentration. Using a cell phone, even a hands-free model, while negotiating a lane change on any freeway or even while walking down a crowded street is always a bad idea. Your computer software can manage this; the human brain can't, even if you are a Gen-X or Y type!

4) Finally, **a cell phone is a tool**, like any other piece of technology. If you need to be constantly "connected", it is useful—but I prefer to **choose** when and where I stay in touch with those far away. You use tools; they shouldn't use you. And when you pay attention to the other human beings around you (who CAN see and hear you), you might find yourself talking with them instead!



Linda  
Falken

## LBCA Grant Adds to Law Library's CLE Collection

In February, the Lane County Bar Association's Executive Board voted to provide a generous \$1000.00 grant to the Lane County Law Library, to assist in the purchase of CLE program materials for use by LCBA members. This grant was in response to a proposal submitted by the Lane County Law Librarian, who was concerned that budget priorities would reduce the number of CLE titles that the library would be able to order in 2007.

The Lane County Law Library has historically managed a collection of CLE program materials and audiotapes/CDs as a service to members of the local bar. In Oregon there are only about four other county law libraries that provide this service. With the assistance of the LCBA grant, the library will be able to purchase an additional 12 programs for the current year. Seven new titles were added in April, and another 5 will be ordered by September.

"We are extremely grateful to the Bar Association for both the funds and for its continuing support of the Law Library," said Linda Falken, Lane County Law Librarian. "The CLE materials represent an important part of our collection, and are heavily used by many attorneys in this area, particularly sole practitioners. With this grant we can continue to provide a reasonable number of new CLE titles for the coming year."

All current CLE materials available for loan are included in the Law Library's online catalog; there is a link to the web-based catalog on the library's web page, at:

[http://www.co.lane.or.us/CC\\_LawLib/](http://www.co.lane.or.us/CC_LawLib/)

Any questions about the CLE collection can be directed to library staff at 682-4337.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Research Hint: Finding Court Rules, Forms and Dockets on the Web

A list of websites and sources for finding court approved forms, court rules or electronic dockets is available through the online webzine, [www.llrx.com](http://www.llrx.com). (which is a great source of information for legal research enthusiasts and law technies). To find the list (organized by state and type of resource), go to:

<http://www.llrx.com/courtrules/>

### *Draft of Law Library's Revised Acquisition Policy Now Available on Website*

The Law Library's Collection Development Policy has been revised, and the most recent version is now available on the Law Library's website. Since this is still in draft form, we welcome user's comments or questions. Please see POLICIES at:

[http://www.co.lane.or.us/CC\\_LawLib/](http://www.co.lane.or.us/CC_LawLib/)

# NEW BOOK NOTES

The following are titles recently acquired by the Law Library; you will find them on the library shelves. Ask the library staff for information on their locations:

**CLIENT SERVICE: EFFECTIVE AND ETHICAL, with Roy Ginsburg**, (OSB Program material, 9/8/2006) call number: **AT-248 2006 (3 ethics credits)**

**INDIAN LAW 2006: SOLUTIONS FOR THE GENERATIONS**, (OSB Program material, 10/20/06) call number: **AT-251 2006 (6.75 elimination of bias or general credits)**

**THE LIFE CYCLE OF AN E-COMMERCE COMPANY**, (OSB Program material, 9/22/06) call number: **AT-250 2006 (7 general credits)**

**NEGOTIATING ETHICS: WINNING WITHOUT SELLING YOUR SOUL, with Marty Lantz**, (OSB Program material, 12/1/05) call number: **AT-245 2005 (3 ethics credits)**

**ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL: BIAS IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION**, (OSB Program material, 12/8/05) call number: **AT-246 2005 (3.5 elimination of bias credits)**

**REPRESENTING CLIENTS WITH PERSONALITY DISORDERS** (OSB Program material, 3/17/07) Call number: **AT-247 2006 (5.5 elimination of bias and .75 ethics credits)**

**TAKING AND DEFENDING DESPOSITIONS AND USING DEPOSITIONS AT TRIAL**, (OSB Program material, 9/15/06) Call number: **AT-249 2006 (6.25 general credits)**

\*\*\*\*\*

## 2007 WEBBY AWARD FOR BEST LAW WEBSITE GOES TO PRO BONO NET

The winner of the 2007 Webby Award for Best Law Website is LawHelp.org, which was created and maintained by Pro Bono Net, a national nonprofit organization working to increase technology tools that expand access for justice to low income people with legal problems. Pro Bono Net is based in New York City and was founded in 1998; it works with a network of nonprofit legal aid providers, courts, law libraries and bar associations, through [www.lawhelp.org](http://www.lawhelp.org) and [www.probono.net](http://www.probono.net) to recruit and manage volunteers who work to provide direct information and online tools for low-income users.

[www.LawHelp.org](http://www.LawHelp.org) provides links to self-help websites for all 50 states. The template for each state's page is similar, but the amount of information varies according to the state.

For more information about Pro Bono Net and the Webby award, go to: <http://www.lawhelp.org/NationalNews.cfm>

## SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT: Legal Protections for Members of U.S. Military

The Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act, originated in 1940 to protect service members' rights while serving overseas, has been completely rewritten and renamed as the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. This new law was signed by Pres. Bush in December of 2003, and provides legal protections for regular service members, as well as reservists called up for duty. These protections include the right to request reduced interest rates on pre-service loans under specific conditions, the right to terminate pre-service residential leases or pre-service automobile leases, protection from eviction (if monthly rent is \$1,200 or less), and delay (in some circumstances) of civil court actions, such as bankruptcy, foreclosure or divorce. For service members or their dependents, there are websites which summarize some of these protections (as well as advise how to contact the local JAG office), at:

[http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/Relief\\_Act\\_Revision/](http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/Relief_Act_Revision/)

<http://usmilitary.about.com/cs.sscra/a/scra2.htm>

Most importantly, many types of actions in the Lane County Circuit Court now require that parties verify that the opposing party in a judgment proceeding or eviction is NOT in the military. The Defense Department maintains a searchable database at:

<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/scra/owa/home> (notice that the URL REQUIRES "https" at the beginning: just typing [www.dmdc](http://www.dmdc.mil) etc. will NOT work)

where you can verify if someone is actively serving or not. However, you will need either a birth date month and year OR a social security number, in addition to the person's first and last name, in order to verify military service.

## ✦ Chronology of Known Data Breaches Listed on Website

The Privacy Rights Clearinghouse maintains a list of incidents (along with numbers of known records that were compromised or lost during the breach) on its website, at:

[www.privacyrights.org/ar/ChronDataBreaches.htm](http://www.privacyrights.org/ar/ChronDataBreaches.htm)

This list includes all known or reported losses of personal data by companies, educational institutions and government agencies from 2005 to the present day. The list runs to over 91 pages (!) and includes daily reports of lost records, due to hacking, fraud and staff misconduct.

**LEGAL RESEARCH TOOLS, cont. from p. 1**

**www.findlaw.com** cont. The attorneys' section includes links to state-specific sites for legal information, as well as forums for trading information with colleagues. There is also a news forum, which provides full-text articles by legal professionals on practice-specific topics.

**www.ilrg.com (Internet Legal Resource Guide)** is another portal which indexes by topic over 4000 websites across the globe. It has an extensive list of links to forms (not all of them free, and not specific to Oregon laws—before using, you should consult with an attorney or with your local courts), as well as directories for locating attorneys and legal experts, salaries information (for attorneys) and law school rankings. In addition, it also links to academic study guides, and has an extensive list of links to online law reviews. (under “Academia: ILRG Legal Index”). In addition, under the heading of “Legal Research”, there is a search engine that allows you to limit your results to a specific state or federal jurisdiction, and an online legal bookstore. While most of the features of this site are aimed at attorneys, law students and legal scholars, there are many of use to non-attorneys as well.

**www.nolo.com** This site is an excellent source of information for non-attorneys. In fact, everything available on this site is designed for people with limited knowledge about legal issues. It is offered by Nolo Press, a Berkeley-based publisher of self-help legal guides for California and other areas. The main page offers a menu of links to legal topics, which users can view by clicking on the specific tab at the top of the screen. And Nolo also provides links to its publications and electronic products (such as kits for wills, business forms, etc.) The information on the Nolo site is not specific to any state, so users should check with their own state's statutes, etc. to verify the information. And any forms software offered there might need some tweaking to comply with local court requirements. But the informational articles are written by attorneys, and do explain general issues, such as traffic tickets, tenant's rights, debt collection practices that are unfair, etc. There is also a search engine box at the top of the main screen, so that users can locate related pages not displayed in the pull down menu.

**www.law.cornell.edu** - The Legal Information Institute is one of the oldest and largest internet portals available. In 2005 there were more than 180,000 links from other sites to this one, and the site receives millions of hits per week. It is maintained by Cornell University Law School, and has links to many government and court web sites throughout the world; it rivals the Law Library of Congress site in the scope of its world coverage. While it is designed primarily for legal scholars, students and lawyers, there are many useful tools available here, including

an online citation guide. In addition, there are special topical “libraries” on social security (with numerous links to government and nonprofit websites which provide background and regulation information) and on legal ethics (American Legal Ethics Library, with links to ethics materials for the ABA and all 50 states). This site is definitely worth bookmarking, if only for the legal directories that it offers!

**www.washlaw.edu** Washburn University's Law Library maintains a portal site which is just as useful as Cornell's, and also has extensive links to self-help sites for pro se users. At the top of the main page is an index, and the “Pro Se” and the “Reflaw” (for reference sources, including links to pages on legal research) are particularly good. Also useful are links to “Legal Forms”, “Law Journals” (links to most online law reviews and bar association publications), and “LawLibraryCatalogs” (which links to many academic and special law libraries catalogs and home pages, with interlibrary loan contacts). One caveat on the Legal Forms page, however. I have found that many of the links here for Oregon forms are to commercial vendors who sell forms supposedly customized for Oregon courts. So I advise users to be very cautious about using these sources, and to either check with local attorneys or courts about whether particular forms are acceptable in their local court.

**http://www.halt.org/lic/** This is more of a website than a portal. **H.A.L.T.** is a nonprofit group, founded in 1978, which promotes public interest projects for small claims and court reforms, and advocates for more accessible information for legal consumers. The Legal Information Clearinghouse provided by this group has a number of issues, most of them focused on consumer-related issues such as bankruptcy, debts, warranties, etc. While the information (and publications) offered through this website demonstrate the reformer philosophy of its Board of Directors (consumer and government accountability advocates, plus the co-founder of Nolo Press), the language is simple and straightforward, and the writing directed towards individuals who are interested in handling their own legal matters. However, I have found the links to some of the pages here a bit “clunky” and slow to load at times.

*“Education is when you read the fine print. Experience is what you get if you don't.”*

Pete Seeger, folk-singer,  
activist and author  
1919-