

WSLL WEB TOUR

WHAT'S THERE, WHAT'S WHERE, WHAT'S NEW (The Wisconsin State Law Library Website)

Presented by Connie Von Der Heide, Wisconsin State Law Library
WAPL Conference – Eau Claire – May 3, 2007

About WSLL

- ❖ Oldest library in the state, created by Act of Congress signed April 20, 1836
- ❖ An Agency of the Wisconsin Supreme Court (Judicial Branch)
- ❖ Serves Courts/Judges, Attorneys, Gov't Employees, and the Public, pursuant to Wis. Statute 758.01 and WI Supreme Court Rule SCR 82.01 (Circulation privileges are limited to Judges & Court Staff, Attorneys, and Gov't Employees)
- ❖ Operates the Milwaukee Legal Resource Center (MLRC) and Dane County Legal Resource Center (DCLRC) through contractual arrangements with those counties
- ❖ Located at 120 MLK, Jr. Blvd., downtown Madison
- ❖ Open 8-5 Monday-Friday
- ❖ 24/7 access on the web at <http://wsll.state.wi.us>

Please refer to our brochure for more information. If you would be willing to print and distribute copies of our brochure at your library, leave your business card with today or email me later, and I'll email you the artwork (PDF format): Connie.VonDerHeide@wicourts.gov

About the WSLL Website

- ❖ Launched in 1999
- ❖ Created in part for self-survival at the Reference Desk; a way to capture and share the resources we've located while answering questions.
- ❖ Maintained by two WSLL staff members; all staff make suggestions, and we welcome suggestions from library users and web visitors
- ❖ Continually updated with new content
- ❖ Our new Webmaster/Cataloger started in mid-March; watch for gradual improvements!

Let's Take a Tour

Quick Links allow fast access to "top 10" primary law sources: Wis. Statutes, Admin. Code, Opinions, Circuit Court Records, Circuit Court Forms, and more. See separate handout, *Searching the Wisconsin Statutes and other Revisor's Bureau NXT Infobases*.

The Legal Topics A-Z page provides quick access to both primary and secondary sources of information for over 400 different topics.

The Wisconsin Law, Federal Law, State Law and Tribal Law pages provide links to statutes, regulations, court opinions, and other "primary law" resources. Each page is arranged by branch of government. The Wisconsin Law page also includes local government resources, including links to ordinances for over 350 Wisconsin municipalities and counties.

Not everything is available on the web...at least not for free. One must still consult printed sources or use fee-based electronic databases to access:

- ❖ Wisconsin Statutes and session laws prior to 1968
- ❖ Wisconsin appellate opinions prior to mid-1995
- ❖ Wisconsin jury instructions
- ❖ Many law reviews and other legal periodicals (more on these in a moment!)
- ❖ Most treatises (monographic works that explain, analyze, critique or index the law).

WSLL and MLRC both provide free in-library access to Westlaw and Shepard's Public Access. WSLL, MLRC and DCLRC provide free in-library access to Loislaw.com. These services allow keyword searching of caselaw, statutes and regulations for nearly all U.S. federal and state jurisdictions, as well as Wisconsin Attorney General opinions, jury instructions, and many State Bar of Wisconsin treatises.

Legal forms of all kinds are available on the WSLL Web: court forms, state agency forms, federal forms, county forms and information, and more.

Court forms are becoming somewhat easier to find, primarily due to the courts' efforts to streamline procedures for processing the ever-growing number of cases involving pro se (self-represented) litigants. It is estimated that for family cases alone, more than 70% have at least one self-represented party.

The Wisconsin Court System has standardized and mandated the use of many different circuit court forms. All are available on their website. In April 2006 they rolled out a new Wisconsin Court System Self-Help Family Web Site, which contains county-specific guides for divorce/legal separation, and court forms that may be filled out interactively. These forms are not mandated, but all circuit courts are required to accept them. Several forms are also available for post-judgment family actions, such as modifying child support and physical placement orders. The next area scheduled to receive "pro se treatment" is Small Claims.

The Legal Forms page also provides access to lists of forms for sale at WSLL, MLRC and DCLRC, as well as a link to the Wisconsin Legal Blank company, which sells many types of legal forms. If there's an office supply store in your community that sells legal forms, it's likely that WI Legal Blank is their supplier.

Many other forms are available "out there on the web." Use caution; accuracy and legitimacy should always be verified before using them. WSLL has many books containing sample forms or sample language used in them. Contact us or refer your patrons to us for assistance.

The last group of links on the left sidebar of our homepage lead to many secondary resources for both law-related and general use. Among the many resources on the Reference Tools page are a legal encyclopedia of sorts (Zimmerman's Research Guide) and several law dictionaries available freely on the web.

The Directories page includes many state, federal and local government directories, as well as attorney directories including Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory and the State Bar of Wisconsin's Licensed Attorneys directory. There is also a link to agencies providing low or no-cost legal assistance in Wisconsin.

The Law Search Tools button leads to several comprehensive sites such as FindLaw, FirstGov, GPO Access and others. The Historic Documents page provides links to text, images and information about the U.S. Constitution, Gettysburg Address, and others. It also provides access to collections of such documents prepared by other organizations.

The Law Reviews and Newspapers links provide access to a variety of publications, a few of which provide free full text access. (More on accessing journals and newspapers in a moment)

In the bottom right of the WSLL homepage are links to general resources for doing legal research. Under Legal Research Guides, you'll find a directory of Wisconsin law libraries open to the public, and several research guides for non-lawyers. Of particular interest is the Introduction to Legal Materials: A Manual for Non-Law Librarians in Wisconsin, published by the Law Librarians Association of Wisconsin. It's available in print from the Association, or in PDF online.

NEW: In the top right of the homepage you can now search our catalog. Use it to find not only what's in the library, but also what's on the web. Our new Electronic Resources Management (ERM) module has allowed us to add links to online full text articles from over 8,000 periodicals included in LegalTrac, HeinOnline, and several EbscoHost and ProQuest databases. Simply search the periodical title in the catalog, and if electronic holdings are displayed, click through to the full text article.

Our new Journals and Databases page describes each electronic resource and who may access it. You may also search individual journal titles on this page. Note that several resources require entry of a WSLL library card number. To obtain a card for yourself, leave your business card with me today or email our Reference Desk, wsl.ref@wicourts.gov. Please note that your card is in your name and for your use only. You may share your number with other library staff if you wish, but please do not disclose it to the public or place it on any online lists, websites, etc.

LegalTrac is a citation index to articles published in over 900 legal periodicals, with coverage back to 1980.

LegalTrac searching tips:

- ❖ Use the Advanced Search, and limit your search by journal title **wisconsin or marquette**.
- ❖ Remember to check for results under both **Academic Journals** and **Magazines** tabs, and any others that are activated.
- ❖ If a "Full Text" link appears below the citation, click it to view.
- ❖ If WSLL owns the periodical, a link will appear below the citation; click it to access our library catalog record; you might be able to access full text from there. Case in point: *Wisconsin Lawyer*, the monthly State Bar of Wisconsin magazine.

HeinOnline is a full text journal database built from the Hein Company's extensive fiche holdings. Many titles date back to the very first published volume. Pages display in PDF format.

HeinOnline Searching tip

- ❖ Use the Author/Title search whenever possible. The keyword search is not very robust for searching across all titles.

Last Stop: User Services

The pages in this box highlight the services we provide. Our Reference Assistance page outlines the four ways **anyone** can contact our Reference Desk, the types of reference assistance we can and cannot provide, and contains a brief glossary of terms. On our Document Delivery page you'll find information about how to place a request, as well as a list of fees. Our Classes & Tours page provides a listing of upcoming classes being taught at WSL. Most are hands-on and all relate to legal research. Classes are open to anyone; some are targeted more to the legal community and offer continuing legal education (CLE) credits.

WSL also offers workshops specifically for librarians. Our Legal Reference in a Nutshell workshop is especially popular, and works well as a library system CE program. If interested, ask me for a brochure today or email me at Connie.VonDerHeide@wicourts.gov

Many of you are familiar with the library's monthly newsletter, *WSL @ Your Service*. If you're on the WLA or WisPubLib e-list, you already receive our monthly alert postings. If you'd like to be added to our direct email list, give me your business card today or email me at Connie.VonDerHeide@wicourts.gov All past issues of *WSL @ Your Service* are available on the Newsletters webpage.

Finally, our Other Libraries page provides links to websites and catalogs of selected other Wisconsin libraries, including Marquette and UW Law Libraries, Madison and Milwaukee Public Libraries, Wis. Historical Society Library, Wis. Legislative Reference Bureau Library. You can also access both WorldCat and WisCat here, as well as listings of practically all other libraries in the state.

If you need help finding or using legal materials, or answering a legal reference question?
Please contact us, or feel free to refer your library users directly to us.

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Toll Free 800-322-9755, ask for the Reference Desk
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On the web <http://wsl.state.wi.us>