Hey, Guess What? We Lost

by Nonie Watt

For more years now than most of us want to admit, the Law Library has been entering a team in the Monroe County Public Library’s VITAL Quiz Bowl. Just to refresh your memory, the Quiz Bowl is an annual fundraiser supporting the library’s adult literacy program. The ever stalwart Perry and the Masons is comprised of Ralph Gaehler, Dave Lankford, Dick Vaughan and Nonie Watt (as Captain Perry). If you are one of our many fans who have followed us over the years, then both of you probably know we have had our share of ups and downs. While we can usually manage to make it past the first round, we invariably go down in flames during Round 2. Last year was a rare exception when our team captain went on hiatus and the team had the audacity to make its way to the quarterfinal round without her! Not to worry though—we’re back to our losing ways.

This year, the first round found us pitted against a team of children from Harmony School. Never mind the fact that we have been competing in this silly contest since our opponents were in Pampers, the fact remains we “kicked some major butt.” Our only challenge was that the entire student population from Harmony came to support their team, while Perry and Company had to make do with one lone fan. Our captain’s eleven-year-old son did his best to cheer us on, even moving from one side of the auditorium to the other, trying to give the illusion of being multiple people. However, his attempt at doing “the wave” was admittedly rather pitiful.

The following night we returned for Round 2, facing a team from One World Enterprises, owners/employees from Lennie’s and Pizza Express. We have played them before (they’ve been around even longer than we have) and we knew we wouldn’t be able to coast to victory in this one. As we watched the game before ours from the Green Room, Lennie and her friends seemed just a bit too friendly while they went on and on about how “tired” they were. Yeah, right! Once our game started, they were off to the races. As you might expect, we knew all the answers as well. Unfortunately, our buzzers must have been malfunctioning since we were seemingly incapable of ringing in ahead of them. No one remembers what the final score was, but let’s just say we lost by more than a couple of points. There was no need to demand a recount, file a protest, or any of the other activities that makes the Quiz Bowl so much fun. We just quietly walked away into the pouring rain, clutching our wonderful parting gifts—cheap, ugly pens.

If you get the chance, come on out and cheer us on next year. Along with the always-amusing Quiz Bowl, a silent auction featuring cool stuff like autographed pictures of Vanna White is also held. It’s a lot of fun and all the proceeds go to a good cause. Besides, if you decide to come then maybe our family members won’t have to humiliate themselves again.

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NEW AND NOTEWORTHY: DV’S DVD UPDATE


While we are always open to patron suggestions, traditionally the selection process has centered around a large bowl of popcorn in the Library staff lounge, a few days after the students have left for the summer. Suggestions from all employees are pitched and a short list is compiled. We always try to wait until the price of a film drops to about $15.00 (a price that seems to be reached sooner and sooner each year.) Needless to say, up until this year we have always purchased VHS tape versions of these films.

This year however, we have decided to start purchasing DVD versions of films. Given the expanding DVD market it just seems to be the way to go. Of course there is a slight problem, the library does not currently have any DVD players. By the time you return for fall classes, however, we will have at least one DVD player in an AV viewing room on the 2nd floor. I suspect we will also have a new batch of movies on DVD by the time you return. While we don’t plan to duplicate the VHS collection on DVD, we will probably duplicate a core group of films. If you would like to recommend what the core group should be, or if you have suggestions for new films, please drop a suggestion in the Library’s suggestion box. In the meantime, if you have a DVD player in your laptop or at home and you would like to view the two DVD’s we already own, Legally Blond (PN1997 .L43 2001 Circ. Desk) and Breaker Morant (PN1997 .B73 1997 Circ. Desk), both are available at the Circulation Desk. A complete list of the films we own is also available at the Circulation Desk.

Dick Vaughan
Acquisitions & Serials Control Librarian

UPDATING UNITED STATES TREATY INFORMATION

How does a researcher discover whether a particular United States treaty has come into force, been published, amended, or whether (in the case of multilateral treaties) the treaty has come into force for additional countries? In fact, there are many indexes that provide this sort of information, but when the United States is a party the first source to turn to is the official State Department Publication, Treaties in Force (Ref. S9.14). This index is published each December, and includes information as of January 1 of the year in which it is published. Thus information contained in the index is about one year out of date as of the date of publication, and two years out of date by the time the next issue is published.

Now the state department has launched a new Treaty Actions web site that updates the information contained in Treaties of Force. The URL for this web site is http://www.state.gov/s/l/c3428.htm. Information on the web site is organized just as it would be in the printed index. Entries are divided into two bilateral and multilateral treaty sections, with information in the former organized alphabetically by country of opposite party. Entries are also grouped by year, with separate links for the most current year and archival collections of earlier years. This archival information is useful, but could also be a source of confusion. Researchers must keep in mind that searching earlier years is not the same as searching the printed index, which contains the complete information for treaties in force, i.e. a record of all treaty actions going back to the beginning of the United States.

Currently, Treaties in Force contains information up through January 1, 2001, and is thus a bit more than one year out of date. The web site updates the printed index with information through November, 2001. Presumably, as the year passes, the Office of Legal Advisor will update the web site, so that it continues to lag no more than approximately one half year behind. If it does so, it will have provided a useful service by making it easy and free to obtain information that has up to now been difficult to obtain.

Ralph Gaebler
Foreign and International Librarian
YOU KNOW YOU’RE A CATALOGER WHEN ...

As a follow-up to Dick Vaughan’s article in March about knowing you are an acquisitions librarian when you start anticipating the number of books that will be published on a particular event, you know that you are a cataloger when you anticipate the subject headings and call numbers that will be assigned to a particular event. For example, the Library of Congress has traditionally used the most recent form of a country’s name when assigning geographic subject headings. If a book is published about the King Philip’s War (which occurred in New England in the late 17th century), the geographic heading that is used is United States, even though the U.S. did not come into existence until 1776 (or 1783 or 1787 depending on your point of view). When the Soviet Union broke up, the Library of Congress broke with this tradition. The geographic heading of Soviet Union had been used even for topics which predated 1917. What the Library of Congress should have done if the past was any indication was change all the headings to either Russia, or Ukraine, or Belarus, etc. However, LC realized what a huge job this would be, plus the director of the Library of Congress, James Billington, is a Russian scholar and evidently had strong views on what should be done. LC decided to leave Soviet Union for the records with the time period of 1917-1991, and after that date use headings like Russia, etc. When the Soviet Union broke up, I remember wondering what the Library of Congress was going to do about all the headings in their catalog. I had the same thoughts when Germany reunited.

The events of September 11th generated much discussion on some of the electronic lists that I read. People wondered and discussed what subject heading the Library of Congress would assign. LC finally settled on “September 11 Terrorist Attacks, 2001” with 15 alternate references referring back to authorized heading (like “World Trade Center-Pentagon Terrorist Attacks, 2001” etc.). New call numbers were also assigned to this. Like Dick, I wonder what subject headings and call numbers will be assigned to the Enron collapse.

Michael Maben, Cataloging Librarian

Good Luck Graduates!

SUMMER FUN WITH GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

What is FirstGov.gov? FirstGov.gov is an easy-to-search, free-access web site designed to give you a centralized place to find information from U.S. local, state and federal government agency web sites.

What is the objective of FirstGov? FirstGov's objective is to provide a free service, enabling the global community to easily and rapidly find U.S. government information that has been posted on the Internet. It offers a powerful search engine and an index of web-accessible government information and services to help you find what you need.*

But how can we have fun with FirstGov? There are three user categories on the FirstGov web page: citizens, business, and governments. This is where the fun begins.

Take a look at the column on the left, “Online Services for Citizens.” In addition to many practical and useful search links (to job banks, medical, environmental, and tax information, registration with the Selective Service, passport applications, copyright searches, applications with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Service, voter registration, student loan applications, instructions for obtaining official records from your state's public health department or vital records department, etc., etc.) you can go shopping!

Click on Government Shopping, and you are easily transported to the virtual “Government Shopping Mall.” Once inside, you will find a veritable cornucopia of purchase selections.

- Need a new house? You can buy real property from the U.S. Government Auction House, U.S. Marshals Service Seized Property Auctions, and the IRS Real Property Sales.
- Feel lonely inside your new house? Adopt a wild horse or burro from the Bureau of Land Management.
- Interested in investments? Shop for T-Bills, notes and bonds from the U.S. Treasury Department. Browse the fed’s store for mortgages, securitized loans, savings bonds, securities and more.
- Feeling adventuresome? You can find auctions of property taken in criminal seizures, including aircraft, automobiles, boats, motorcycles, industrial equipment and more.

Want to travel? Amtrak and National Parks are only a click away. The U.S. Geological Survey provides digital maps and data, aerial photography, software and atlases. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration can supply you with nautical charts, publications, historical maps, maps of offshore oil and gas leasing areas, plotting maps and posters.

Jennifer Bryan
Government Documents Librarian

WORKING THE HALLS

Please join us in wishing the following people Happy Birthday!

Belated Happy April Birthdays to:

- Rebecca Bertolini Meli on the 6th
- Prof. Pat Baude on the 7th
- Kim Bunge on the 8th
- Micah Van Hoff on the 11th
- Linda Fariss on the 13th
- Marjorie Young on the 16th
- Prof. Rob Fischman on the 17th
- Prof. David Williams and Jan Turner on the 25th
- Sean Frew on the 26th
- Katherine Johnston on the 27th and
- Prof. Val Nolan on the 28th

Happy May Birthdays to:

- Scott Palmer and Ralph Gaebler on the 3rd
- Christy Cazee on the 18th
- Jeanne Brown on the 19th
- Prof. Fred Cate on the 20th and
- Prof. Don Gjerdingen on the 22nd

Happy July Birthdays to:

- Profs. Lisa Farnsworth and Peter Van Zante on the 1st
- Amy Cheek on the 2nd
- Tim Martin and Jim Schutter on the 4th
- Ann Likes and Theresa Magnus on the 9th
- Profs. Sophia Goodman and Susan Williams on the 12th and
- Profs. Perry Hodges and John Scanlan on the 18th

Happy August Birthdays to:

- Beth Plew and Prof. Laura Daghe on the 5th
- Prof. Gene Shreve on the 6th
- Prof. Dawn Johnsen on the 14th
- Dean Len Fromm and Prof. Steve Conrad on the 16th
- Prof. Seth Lahn on the 17th
- Dale Calabrese, Prof. Ed Greenebaum and Prof. Jeff Stake on the 19th
- Prof. Jeannine Bell on the 20th and
- Sherrilyn McCoy-Lawrence on the 27th

LAW LIBRARY SEMESTER BREAK HOURS
MAY 4 - 12, 2002

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LAW LIBRARY SUMMER HOURS
MAY 13 - AUGUST 16, 2002

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SUGGESTION BOX

Every month in this space associate director Linda Fariss normally responds to a suggestion from the Suggestion Box. However, final exams seem to have consumed our patrons and there were no suggestions this time! So, Linda, and the rest of the library staff, would like to wish everyone a lovely summer break. Good luck to our 2002 graduates, and we’ll see everyone else back next year!