Even More Electronic Resources: Law Library Adds CQ.com’s Legislative Impact and Committee

By Peter Hook, Electronic Services Librarian

The Library has long provided access to CQ.com (from the people that publish Congressional Quarterly). CQ.com provides news information about the legislative process as well as Congressional documents (Bill Text, Committee Reports, the Congressional Record, Public Laws, and the U.S. Code). With CQ.com, it has long been possible to track bills as they work their way through Congress. With the two new modules, this process is easier and more comprehensive.

CQ Legislative Impact allows one to see how pending bills would impact current laws. The service does this by linking the text of the bill to the public laws and sections of the U.S. Code that the bill would modify. The well designed interface allows one to search by keyword (both in the full text of the bill or just in the title) or by document number (U.S. Code, Statute of Large, Public Law Number, or Bill Number). In addition, one can browse all Acts by name. Best of all, the platform provides integrated links with other CQ.com products such as CQ Bill Analysis.

CQ Committee provides news accounts of what transpired in the various legislative committees. This is where the real action is in Congress as this is where proposed bills are most extensively modified and debated. CQ Committee provides a journalistic account of this process and lets one know the views of the various committee members and the changes to proposed legislation that they supported. CQ.com’s Committee Amendment Text allows one to see the text of the committee amendment and the name(s) of the Congresspersons that proposed the amendments.

Note: for access to Congressional Quarterly Weekly, the standard source for news on legislative initiatives and politics in Washington, visit the link to CQ Electronic Library off of the Law Library’s Online Resources page.
The legal publishing industry has been in a state of constant motion for more than a decade. An industry that featured dozens of publishers in early 90s has been reduced to three core corporations and their publishing subsidiaries – Thomson (West, Carswell, Sweet & Maxwell, etc.), Reed Elsevier (LexisNexis, Michie, Shepards, etc.), and Wolters Kluwer (Aspen, Kluwer Law International, CCH, etc.) So, every time one of these companies buys or sells a division, it is big news in the law library world.

Library ears perked up recently when it was announced that the Thomson Corporation is getting ready to put its Thomas Learning division on the auction block. The most recognizable name in the Thomson Learning portfolio, at least to law library patrons, is probably the Thomson Gale Company. Even before it was purchased by Thomson, the Gale Company was a leading publisher of library reference materials dating back to the 1930s. Since being acquired by Thomson it has become one of the leading producers of digital legal databases for the law school market. Patrons of the IU Law Library see the Thomson Gale logo every time they log on to some of the Library’s most popular databases, including: LegalTrac, The Making of Modern Law, and U.S. Supreme Court Records and Briefs, 1832-1978, to name a few.

The proposed sale caught quite a few experts off guard, perhaps because the Learning division made up 26 percent of Thomson’s revenues in 2005, producing 2.3 billion in revenue and operating income before taxes of 350 million. Still, it has been rumored for months as Thomson has sent out signals that they were leaning towards focusing on a strategy of selling to professionals by concentrating on legal, financial, and scientific information businesses, not the educational market. Potential suitors for the company in the last month or two include some of the bigger names in non-law digital publishing. EBSCO, Pro-Quest, and the H. W. Wilson Company are all considered possible bidders, while some information industry bloggers are suggesting that Google might want to take a look at the company.

Regardless of who purchases the division, library patrons should see little or no change in the Thomson Learning division databases they use. Unfortunately, these types of sales seem to always result in higher prices for accessing the databases and right now the IU Law Library spends more than $65,000 per year just to access the three databases mentioned above.

Dick Vaughan
Acquisitions and Serials Control Librarian

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The World Trade Organization website is a model of clarity and accessibility for all international organizations to follow. Perhaps this is a matter of necessity, since the WTO generates a vast amount of official documentation, rivaled only by that of the United Nations and the European Union for sheer bulk and complexity.

Recently, the WTO has made it even easier for researchers to gain access to several types of important documentation stored at its web site. First, the researcher now has access to more information associated with Trade Policy Reviews. For those not already familiar with the Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM), it constitutes a periodic peer assessment of member states’ trade policies, conducted by the WTO Secretariat on behalf of the WTO General Council. The objective of the TPRM is to “enhance the transparency of Members’ trade policies.” Each member country is reviewed on a periodic basis, with the frequency of review determined by the share of world trade each member represents. The reviews contain a great deal of detailed information about member economies and trade policies, and therefore are potentially very useful to researchers. Each review now contains four separate documents: a policy statement by the government of the member under review; a detailed report written independently by the WTO Secretariat; a press release summarizing both of the main documents; a second press release containing the conclusions of the chairman of the TPRM. Until recently, the main reports were not publicly available.

The WTO has also improved its facilities for finding dispute settlement documents. It is now possible to search by dispute number, by country, and by dispute type. Additional indexes enable searches by legal concept and product type. On the same page the researcher will also find an “Update of all WTO dispute settlement cases.” This document is updated several times per year following regular meetings of the Dispute Settlement Body, and reflects the status of disputes filed since 1 January 1995. The Update includes summaries of all the arguments and findings developed in each relevant dispute.

Ralph Gaebler
Foreign & Int’l Librarian

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Last week, HeinOnline unveiled its new Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) collection. The CFR is now available in an image-based (PDF) format, from its inception in 1938 through the 1983 edition. You will find the CFR content located within HeinOn-
THE SUGGESTION BOX

Every month in this space Associate Director Linda Fariss responds to a suggestion from the Suggestion Box.

Suggestion: The hanging artwork is too clustered.

Response: It’s hard to answer this in any way that is likely to satisfy you! As we all know, response to this artwork (or any art for that matter), is very individualized. I actually prefer it clustered, but recognize that not everyone does. Unfortunately for you and those who agree with you, I doubt that the positioning of the artwork will be changed anytime soon as it would be quite expensive to change. Thanks for noticing the artwork (I have received very few responses, positive or otherwise).

Suggestion: Cell phone booths on different floors (not in bathrooms - too uncomfortable).

Response: This is an interesting suggestion. I’m not sure how much this would cost or where we would put them, but I will pass the suggestion along. In the meantime, I’m afraid you are limited to going to the bathroom or (preferably) leaving the Library and going to the lobby to talk on your cell phone.
up a computer for her. Abdala replied with, “A real lawyer would have put the contract into writing and not exercised any such reliance until he did so.” Korman responded with a somewhat menacing threat, “You need to realize that this is a very small legal community, especially the criminal defense bar.” Abdala countered with an emotional, although less than articulate, “Bla bla bla.”

This e-mail exchange was passed along by Korman and made its way into inboxes across the country, various listserv’s, and Wikipedia.org. While Abdala might have indeed damaged her name among Boston’s criminal defense community, she had a trust fund that allowed her to open her own practice. Most law grads are not so lucky. In any event, we should all be careful about the contents and the tone of our e-mails, never more so than when corresponding with potential employers.

*Liz Goldberg
Reference Librarian

PET OF THE MONTH: CORKY LIKES

Corky, Ann Likes’ Miniature Schnauzer, has lived with her and her husband Scott since Christmas 1999. Ann, who works in the Technical Services Department of the Law Library, found an ad in the newspaper for a Bedford rescue home for Schnauzers. After an interview during a home visit, the rescue home decided to award Ann and Scott custody of the 4 year old dog.

Corky likes long walks and long naps and lots of treats. Not socialized as a puppy, Cork does not care for other people and their dogs and struggles with her day to day interactions with those she is unfamiliar with. She has been though, a happy edition to the family.

*Ann Likes
Serials Cataloging Technician

Law Library Thanksgiving Hours
November 21 - 26, 2006

Tuesday, November 21 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday, November 22 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Thursday, November 23 CLOSED
Friday, November 24 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 25 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 26 Resume Regular Hours

Law Library Final Exam Hours
December 2 - 15, 2006

December 2 Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 midnight
December 3 Sunday 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 a.m.
December 4-8 Mon.-Fri. 7:30 a.m. - 2:00 a.m.
December 9 Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 midnight
December 10 Sunday 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 a.m.
December 11-14 Mon.-Thurs. 7:30 a.m. - 2:00 a.m.
December 15 Friday 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Happy November Birthday to:

Professor Amy Applegate on the 6th
Frank Burleigh on the 10th
Professor Dan Conkle on the 10th
Professor Doug Boshkoff on the 11th
Richard Vaughan on the 12th
Bruce Farrand on the 16th
Professor Cathy Crosson on the 21st