

## OLA Annual Report 2014-15

### OLA Unit:

#### **Legal Reference Round Table 2014-15**

### Division, RT, Committee Board Members:

**Chair: Sue Ludington, Washington County Law Library**

**Vice-Chair: Kelly Reynolds, University of Oregon Libraries, Law Library**

### Overall goals and responsibilities of your unit:

**To improve the quality of legal reference service in all types of Oregon public libraries, by opening up lines of communication and increasing professional interaction between Oregon public law library and non-law public library reference staff.**

### Specific objectives and activities planned for current OLA membership year:

- 1. Explore partnership opportunities between county law libraries, public libraries, and the State of Oregon Law Library to provide legal reference assistance and training for public library staff, particularly in areas that have limited legal information resources.**
- 2. Create a list of recommended legal self-help publications appropriate for public library collections.**
- 3. Consult and communicate with the OLA Library Development and Legislation Committee regarding legislation or policies affecting county law libraries and provision of access to legal information.**
- 4. Evaluate the LRRT website "Resources" section for currency and relevance, and update accordingly.**
- 5. Determine if quarterly or tri-annual telephone conference meetings are feasible and if such meetings would facilitate progress towards meeting RT goals.**

### Progress made toward goals and objectives:

- 1. Although no tangible curriculum on legal reference service was developed this past year, nor were training events held, LRRT members continued to informally brainstorm with other OLA Round Tables and the State of Oregon Law Library on efforts to do so. With county law library service becoming increasingly common in public library settings, the LRRT recognizes the urgent need to provide leadership in this area. Planners have discussed training objectives, content and points of emphasis, and other teaching strategies; this will be the LRRT's primary goal of 2015-2016.**
- 2. An updated list of recommended legal self-help titles for public libraries was not produced in a final form this year, but suggestions were solicited and compiled. LRRT members aim to complete the project by December 2015.**
- 3. In September 2014, LRRT Chair Sue Ludington was invited to serve a 3-year term on OLA's Library Development and Legislation Committee (LDLC). She subsequently became an active participant, attending bi-monthly meetings and working with the Intellectual Freedom Committee to develop a Net Neutrality Toolkit. During the legislative session, she shared information with and sought backing from the LDLC on proposed bills relevant to county law libraries.**

4. The LRRT's website saw little enhancement this year and remains a priority. It is hoped that an LRRT member will be assigned to review content, seek feedback for deletions/additions, and make changes as needed.

5. There was little discussion on whether or not to have meetings, as the small LRRT group agreed it would be too burdensome to attempt regular meetings at this time. The bulk of communication continues to be done via email with mostly positive results.

Goals for 2015-16 (categorized):

***Advocacy:*** Continue to bring increased awareness of county law libraries and their unique assets, and educate the OLA community on current trends to alter traditional models of service in Oregon.

***Education:*** Sponsor or coordinate an educational program related to law librarianship, legal reference services, government/civics, or similar topic for the 2016 OLA Conference.

***Leadership:*** Update the LRRT website to provide current, Oregon-specific resources and referral lists that public library staff may quickly and efficiently utilize when assisting patrons with legal reference questions.

***Collaboration:*** Collaborate with the State of Oregon Law Library (SOLL) and the Reference Round Table (RRT) to develop legal reference training for public library staff; conduct one or more trainings for at least one Oregon public library.

Comments:

The LRRT co-sponsored and members co-moderated an OLA Annual Conference educational program this year. "So You Want to Change the World! How to be a Great Librarian to Your Activist Patrons" featured City of Gresham Mayor Shane Bemis and Portland business owner Amber Starks talking about real citizens changing the law and drew a standing-room-only crowd. The program's primary sponsor was the Reference RT, whose secure finances allowed for travel cost reimbursement to the non-librarian presenters. The LRRT and RRT continue to build their alliance, and both groups look forward to co-sponsoring conference sessions in the future.