Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries 1997-98

This year, 1997-98, was one of hard work and preparation for ORALL. We introduced a spring retreat to allow for more concentrated discussion of Association issues and committee work, and began planning the celebration of ORALL’s fiftieth anniversary.

The year’s activities officially began with our annual meeting in Cincinnati on October 22-24. The conference included a workshop on copyright law conducted by Professor Kenneth Crews and a discussion of First Amendment issues related to new technology and the Internet, presented by lawyer Louis Sirkin. We supplemented the substantive programs with a workshop on legal research on the Internet, based on a program originally cosponsored with OhioNet. The workshop presenters were ORALL members Melanie Putnam, Judith Kaul, and Jolm Hopkins.

In the early ’90s ORALL stopped sponsoring two official conferences each year, mainly because of the time commitment required to plan two extensive programs. In recent years, however, the Executive Board recognized the need to provide members additional opportunities for productive committee meetings and general discussions. In an attempt to resolve this dilemma, Immediate Past President Jody Beal organized a retreat at the Ohio State Mohican Park Lodge in March 1998. The day-and-a-half event was very productive and will be repeated next spring.

ORALL’s new Web site has been well received by the membership. Housed on the University of Kentucky server and maintained by newsletter editor Shaun Esposito, the Web site provides members with pertinent chapter information and announcements.

ORALL’s Government Relations Committee and the County Law Libraries Special Interest Group faced several significant challenges during the year. The state of Ohio introduced several bills aimed at restructuring the funding of county law library associations in Ohio. In addition, the Ohio Supreme Court Commission on Access and Quality Task Force opened debate on the future of legal information and research facilities for that state’s bench, bar, and general citizens. Both activities fueled extensive discussion on the chapter discussion list, providing members with an opportunity to debate professional issues and to offer valuable input on these two important developments.

ORALL’s next conference is scheduled for October 28-30, 1998, in Cleveland, Ohio. At that meeting we will kick off our celebration of ORALL's fiftieth anniversary as an organization. We plan a reception at the AALL Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. and a special Golden Anniversary celebration in Columbus at the Adam’s Mark Hotel on October 13-15, 1999.

Kathleen Carrick, President, 1997-98