Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries Annual Report 2004-05

ORALL, the Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries, held its annual meeting in Covington, Kentucky, October 13-15, 2004. Capitalizing on its location on the Ohio River just across from Cincinnati, Ohio, and only a few miles from the Indiana border, the Northern Kentucky meeting focused on "Collaboration: Working across Boundaries." The speakers examined the topic of collaboration in a variety of areas, including legal history, trademarks, collaborative law and mediation, ethics, and research instruction. The program also offered an in-depth look at the USA PATRIOT Act. The speakers included librarians, a former judge, and practicing attorneys, with former Cincinnati mayor Roxanne Qualls as the keynote speaker. Local TV personality Michael Flannery opened the meeting with a light-hearted look at some of the differences between the three states in our region.

Officers for the 2004-05 year were Claudia Zaher, President; Kyle Passmore, Vice President/President-Elect; Maureen Anderson, Secretary; Thomas Hanley, Treasurer (completing the second year of the term after George Baker's resignation); and Sarah Lynch and Susan Hersch, Board Members. Current membership is 308.

In the face of recent moves by the Ohio legislature to eliminate or reduce funding for the county law library system, ORALL actively monitored the legislation and encouraged a letter-writing campaign by individuals. ORALL is committed to continuing its efforts to preserve the strong Ohio county library system and the access to legal information that it provides.

The most important ongoing issue facing ORALL is the possibility of a name change. Many feel that "Ohio Regional" does not adequately describe what is actually a three-state chapter, nor does the current name appear to recognize the active participation of Indiana and Kentucky members in chapter activities and chapter leadership. A task force has been working to identify the issues arising from a name change and will eventually make a recommendation to the general membership.

ORALL leadership focused efforts in the past year on attracting new members to the organization. The executive board awarded four scholarships to attend the ORALL annual meeting and four more to attend the AALL Annual Meeting. For each event, three of the scholarships were targeted at newer members. In additional recruiting efforts, ORALL funded the Kentucky Special Interest Group's session at the University of Kentucky Law Library at which SIG members and other Kentucky law librarians learned about the law library's high tech "Electronic Rural Access to Legal Information Project." The Kentucky SIG also sent some sweet treats and good luck wishes to UK library students at exam time, and some northern Ohio ORALL members spoke to Kent State library students about the profession.

Claudia Zaher, President, 2004-05