

## Clark County Law Library



Information to help  
you seek justice

# Annual Report 2010

*The Clark County Law Library strives to provide access to legal information to all patrons who come through the door. The Library offers personal, professional assistance with no strings attached. Our mission is to ensure that the Clark County Law Library provides a community resource for access to justice for people of any age, income, or educational level.*

The Clark County Law Library Board of Trustees presents this 2010 Annual Report, as required by RCW 27.24. This Report is based on information supplied by Maria Sosnowski, Law Librarian. This Annual Report covers the period from January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010.

We invite your comments. Please feel free to contact members of the Board, or Law Librarian Maria Sosnowski, to share your thoughts about the Library. Board members include Rachel Brooks (Co-Chair), Meridee Pabst (Co-Chair), Commissioner Marc Boldt, Judge John Nichols, and Judge Roger Bennett.

## Highlights of the Year

- New Assistant Law Librarian started work in January
- Sponsored first Westlaw training CLE
- Added new Westlaw database allowing patrons to search for actual pleadings
- Raised more self-generated revenues than ever before
- Assisted 17,552 patrons who came into the library during the year
- Upgraded self-help eviction kit with more detailed instructions

## Our Patrons

The general public is the largest user group in the Law Library, and they asked 81% of the reference questions during the year. Two paralegal programs (Clark College and Everest College) use the Library to teach their students legal research.

The Library also serves 10 Superior Court judges, 6 District Court judges, a magistrate, 4 court commissioners, 500 or more Clark County attorneys as well as attorneys from other counties and Oregon. We provide reference services to inmates in the Clark County Jail and provided interlibrary loan services to other libraries on an as-needed basis. In addition, the Law Library provides collection maintenance services to the Jail Law Library pursuant to an interlocal agreement with the Sheriff's Department.

## Collection Overview

As of December 31, 2010, the Clark County Law Library had approximately 21,500 items. The Library also has Washington State Supreme Court Briefs, individual local court rules, and the periodical Jury Verdicts Northwest.

The Law Library currently subscribes to two on-line legal databases, Shepard's citations and Westlaw. Westlaw has databases for cases and statutes from all states and federal circuits, numerous Washington materials, and various secondary source materials. Shepards offers the ability to check to see if a cited case is still good law.

## Library Statistics

Currently, 41 items are on the missing materials list. This does not include missing books that have been replaced, or outdated items that would have been discarded due to age.

### Materials Count

Approximate volumes at beginning of year	21000
Number of volumes added	1406
Number of volumes discarded	860
Total approximate volumes	21546
Number on missing list	41

### Circulation

Items checked out	891
Inter-Library Loans received	35
Inter-Library Loans sent	4
Total items circulating	930

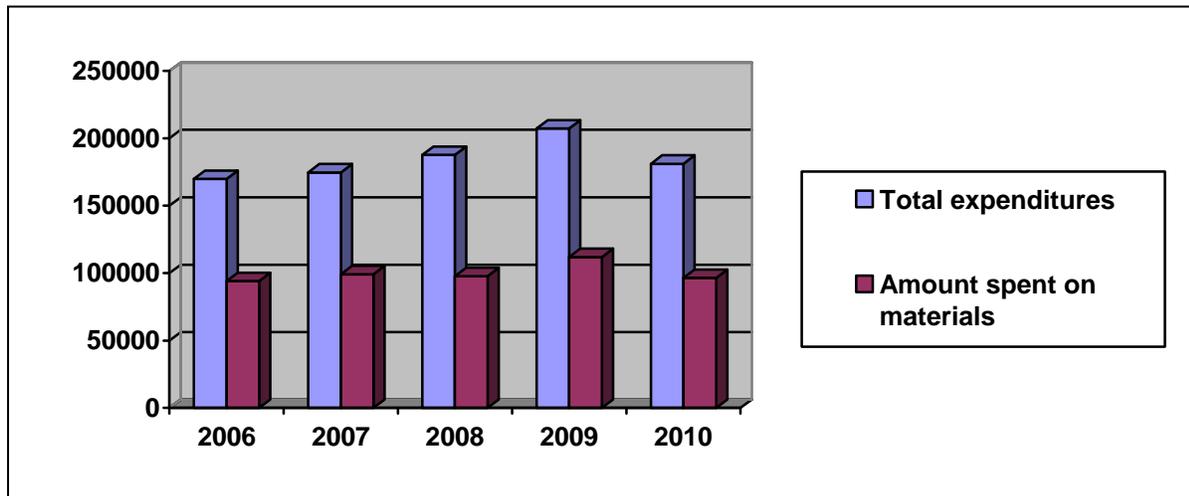
## Books and Print Materials

The law library maintains an extensive collection of Washington materials, including Continuing Legal Education materials from a variety of publishers, Washington State Bar Association Deskbooks, Jury Verdicts Northwest, Washington Practice, and Supreme Court briefs.

We also purchase a number of reporters, treatises, and practice manuals. Given the rising prices of materials, not all of our sets are kept current. Some are maintained on a rotating basis, and some are not maintained. However, we do keep all Washington materials current.

This year 53% of our expenditures were on materials, which includes both computer databases and print materials. Figure 1 on the next page shows the relationship between the amount spent on materials and our total expenditures.

Figure 1: Total Revenue and Amount Spent on Materials 2006 - 2010



## Electronic Resources

The Westlaw subscription includes cases and statutes for all states and federal circuits, an extensive Washington database, and some secondary materials. This contract was renegotiated during the year and will run through December, 2012. Under the new contract, we expanded our contract to include a new pleadings database that allows people to see pleadings filed in cases similar to theirs. Westlaw is an attractive service to attorneys, is used regularly by pro se patrons doing legal research, and is also used by the Librarian to assist patrons. We had 4,684 transactions conducted in the 50 most-used databases during the year.

We also continue to offer Shepards, a Lexis product, as an online subscription. This contract is the same from year to year and offers national Shepards service with a case citation.

The Library offers printing from the computers at 25 cents per page. This allows patrons to print materials they find on free websites as well as our paid subscription websites. Some of that material is not available in print in the Library.

## Use of the Library

### A. Number of people through the door

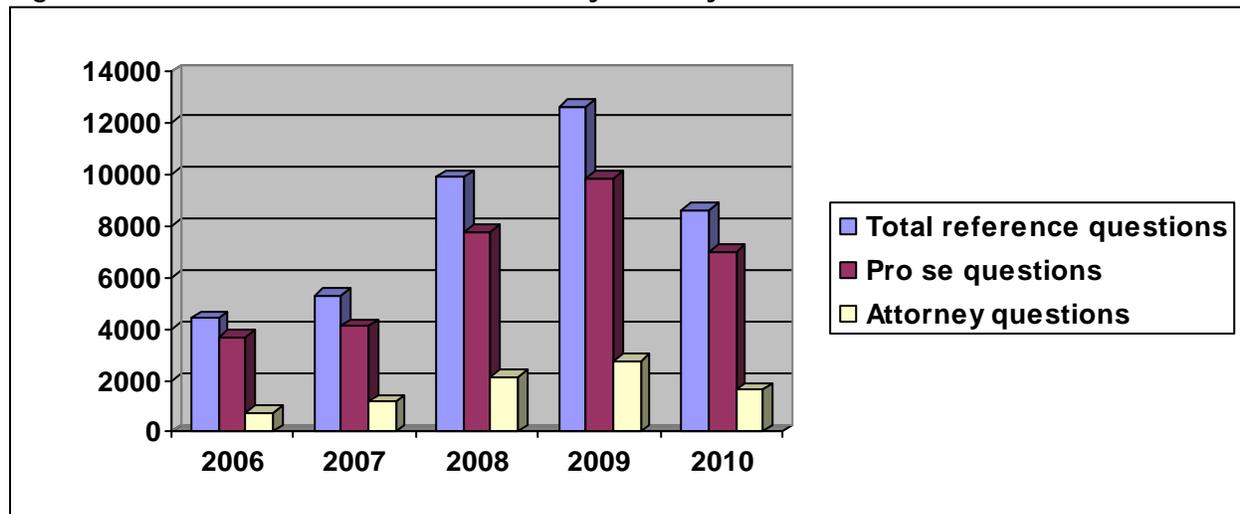
This year we had 17,552 people through the door, including 14,329 during open hours and 3,223 during closed hours. (Attorneys with keycards can enter during closed hours so long as the building is open. This also includes paralegal classes that use the library after hours.)

### B. Reference questions

The Library answered 8,631 reference questions during 2010. Of the total questions, 6,981 (81%) came from pro se patrons (non-attorneys) with the rest (19%) coming from attorneys. This

is a decrease in questions from the previous year, which we believe is due to changes in staff and counting method, rather than an actual decline in the number of questions. This is especially true since the number of people coming into the library was nearly identical in 2009 and 2010.

**Figure 2: Reference Questions 2006 – 2010 by Attorneys and Pro Se Patrons**



### C. Circulation

Non-reserve books may be checked out on the honor system by judges, lawyers, and county officials. During 2010, 891 items were checked out. Four items were sent and 35 items were received through interlibrary loan during this period.

### D. Inmate Requests

During the period covered by this report, the Library received 30 inmate requests.

## Westlaw Training

The Law Library sponsored a Westlaw training CLE for the first time. There were 14 people in attendance at the training, which was held on a Monday afternoon. We offered both an introductory level and intermediate level, and most people attended both. Feedback was positive and we plan to offer the training again in the future.

## Financial Report

The money in our budget comes from our statutory share of filing fees, interest on our reserve account, and any additional funds we are able to generate ourselves. The Law Library continues to look for ways to increase our self-generated revenues (see Figure 3 for a comparison of income from filing fees vs. self-generated revenues). Our revenues came from the following sources:

## A. Passive revenues

1. Filing fees. In 2010, we received \$55,264 from District Court filing fees, and \$137,414 from Superior Court. This was an increase in filing fees of 12% from District Court and a decrease of 1% from Superior Court over 2009.

2. Investment interest. We earned \$2,266 in interest on our account during the year.

## B. Self-generated revenues

1. Form kits. We sold two types of form kits during the year, which raised \$16,677 in net revenues during the year.

2. After-hours access keycards. We continue to charge attorneys for after-hours keycards, which raised \$3,378 in 2010.

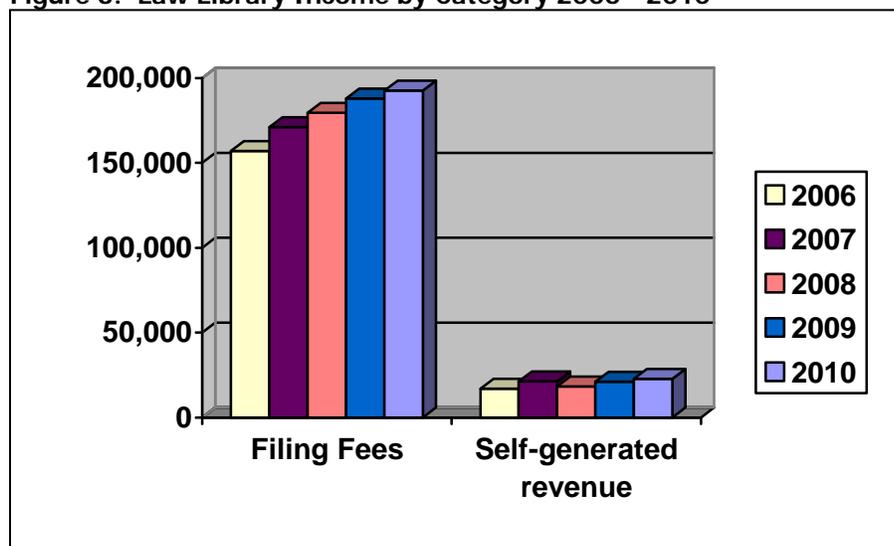
3. Copier. We raised \$1,332 from our share of copier revenues.

4. Sale of outdated materials. Certain materials, which in the opinion of the Librarian are likely to sell, are listed for bid. This allows the Library to raise a nominal amount of money from items that would otherwise be discarded. During the year, we raised an additional \$552 this way.

5. Jail contract. The Board of Trustees has an interlocal agreement with the Clark County Sheriff to provide services to the county jail facility to maintain their law library. In return, the Jail compensates the Library for the time of the law librarian. We received \$805 from the Jail during the year.

Total self-generated revenues: Our total self-generated revenues were \$22,744 for the year, a 7% increase over 2009 and 10% of our total revenue.

**Figure 3: Law Library Income by Category 2006 - 2010**



\*Self-generated revenue includes revenue from after hours access keycard sales, our portion of copy card revenue, revenues from the sale of form packets, and money from bids on discarded items. Beginning in 2007, it also includes money from servicing the jail law library.

We have been setting aside a portion of our revenues each year to pay for updates of titles that are only updated every 3-5 years, to pay for the cost of additional shelving or moving the library in the future, and to absorb future increases in the materials costs. The Library also needs a reserve

account to cover months filing fees are credited late, or for unexpected expenses such as equipment repair and replacement. And we project that in the future expenses will again exceed revenues.

**Figure 4: Income and Expenses for 2006 - 2010**

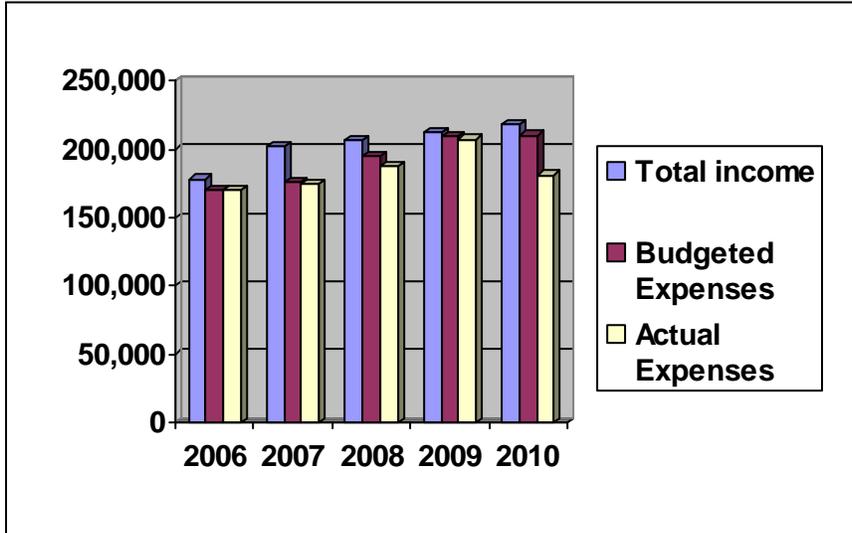


Figure 4 shows our total income compared with both budgeted and actual expenses for the last 5 years. Our revenues exceeded projections by \$8,311. However, because of corrections to paid time off accounts, our 2010 expenses are artificially low.

**Figure 5: Expenses for 2010**

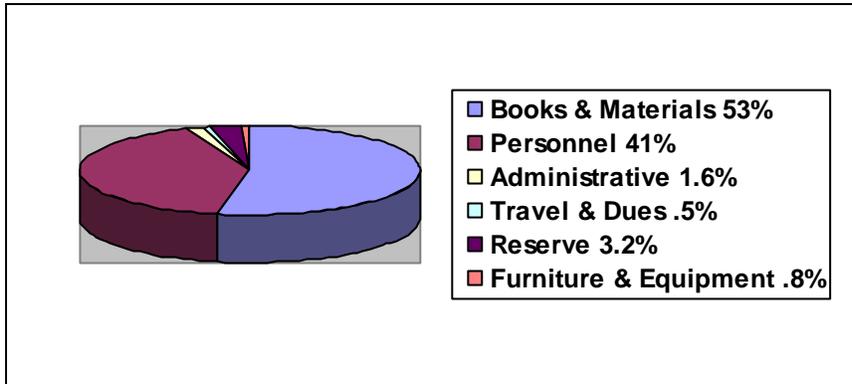
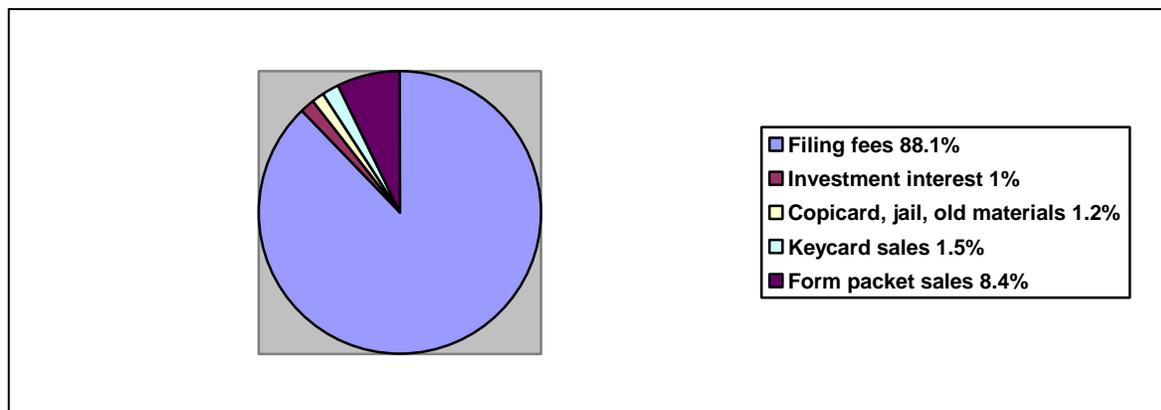


Figure 5 shows a chart of expenses by category. The greatest expense is books and materials. The reserve account is also partially for future purchases of books that are updated only periodically. Figure 6 below illustrates the percentages of our various revenue sources.

**Figure 6: Revenues for 2010 by Source**



And finally, Figure 7 lists expenditures and revenues by category and provides totals for each category. The law library ended the year under budget on expenses and over budget for revenues. As indicated earlier, expenses are artificially low due to adjustments that were made to accumulated accounts by the auditor's office.

**Figure 7: January – December 2010 Expense and Revenue Numbers**

<u>Income</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Percent of budget</u>
District Court filing fees	45,500.00	55,264.00	121%
Superior Court filing fees	141,000.00	137,414.00	97%
Interest	5,000.00	2,266.00	45%
Copicards	1,000.00	1,332.00	133%
After hours access keycards	4,000.00	3,378.00	84%
Form packets (gross)	13,000.00	18,352.00	141%
Jail Law Library services	1,000.00	805.00	81%
<b>Income Subtotal</b>	<b>210,500.00</b>	<b>218,811.00</b>	<b>104%</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>			
Salaries	64,225.00	52,690.00	82%
Employee benefits	23,197.00	20,859.00	90%
Books, materials, and databases	112,000.00	96,378.00	86%
Office supplies and printing	2,000.00	2,520.00	126%
Temporary employment	1,000.00	240.00	24%
Telephone	250.00	316.00	126%
Long distance travel	300.00	308.00	103%
Equipment maintenance/repair	500.00	0.00	0%
Computer maintenance	300.00	0.00	0%
Dues and conferences	1,000.00	603.00	60%
Furniture	0.00	1,465.00	n/a
Reserve account	5,728.00	5,728.00	100%
<b>Expenses Subtotal</b>	<b>210,500.00</b>	<b>181,107.00</b>	<b>86%</b>

## **Staff Development**

Continuing education is important in helping the law librarians provide service to our patrons. It allows staff to learn about new products and technologies, gain ideas from peers, and establish contacts in other law libraries.

During 2010, staff attended meetings of the Washington Association of County Law Librarians (WACLL) and the Access to Justice Conference. Memberships include WACLL, AALL and both the regional chapter (Westpac) and the special interest section for county law librarians (SCCLL).

## **Summary**

The Law Library continues to be proactive in looking for ways to increase services, such as offering the Westlaw training CLE, as well as ways to save money or increase revenues, such as the sale of our form kits.

Going forward, we will continue to seek ways to help the public, and work on improving the marketing of our services to increase awareness in the community of our ability to help them help themselves.

Submitted on behalf of the Board of Trustees by:

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Meridee Pabst, Co-Chair

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Date

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Rachel Brooks, Co-Chair

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Date