

REFERENCE NOTES

A program of the Minnesota Higher Education Services Office (HESO) at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities

February 2000

INSIDE THIS EDITION:

Your Electronic Link to the Legislature.....	1
Web Site Hits.....	2
Print Resources.....	3
Request for Assistance.....	4

Your Electronic Link to the Legislature

by Robbie LeFleur of the Legislative Reference Library

If it is legislative information your patrons need, the first place to check is the Minnesota State Legislature Web Site.

Popular features of the site include:

- *Existing law.* The full text of *Minnesota Statutes* is available. You can search for existing state law by keyword, or section, or browse a table of contents.
- *Proposed laws.* Follow new legislation under consideration from the "Legislation and Bill Tracking" page. You can search bill descriptions by keyword, bill number, *Statute* section affected, or author. Hints: When searching by key word, be sure to pick the appropriate drop-down box for "contains all" or "the exact phrase." For the most thorough coverage, search the long description. The "Legislation and Bill Tracking" page also includes links to guides to researching a specific bill or a legislative issue.
- *Member information:* The Senate and House of Representatives provide biographical information and a list of bills sponsored by each member.
- *Schedules.* You can view the schedules for the House and Senate, or sign up to receive schedules via e-mail.

Over the years a team of Legislative staff members have worked hard to give citizens around the state the same access to legislative information as the people who come to the Capitol. That original goal was accomplished a couple of years ago, but enhancements continue. This year the House of Representatives Public Information Office has added a new feature to highlight legislative news, "Session Daily." Check this page each day for updates on legislative activity. If you like to watch the Legislature in action, check the page mentioning the Legislature's television coverage. As new features or important publications are released, they are noted on the "What's New" page.

If you or any of your patrons have difficulty navigating or using the Legislative Web Site, contact a librarian at the Legislative Reference Library. We have coordinated many improvements to the site as a result of user input. You can call us at: 651-296-8338, or send an e-mail to refdesk@library.leg.state.mn.us

Sites mentioned:

Legislative Web Site: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/>

Legislation and Bill Tracking: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/legis.htm>

House Member Information: <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/hmem.htm>

Senate member Information: <http://www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/members/index.htm>

Schedules: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/schedule.htm>

Session Daily: <http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/sdaily/sdaily.htm>

Television schedules: <http://www.state.mn.us/television.html>

What's New: <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/whatsnew.htm>

INFORMATION BITS

MINITEX ILL Conference

The Ninth Annual MINITEX Interlibrary Loan Conference will be held on Friday, May 12, 2000, on the St. Paul Campus of the University of Minnesota. Registration information will be distributed in March!

7th Annual Collection Development Symposium

"Trends in the Academy and the Identity of Research Libraries" is presented by MINITEX and the U of M Libraries on May 22, 2000. For more information visit the Web site at <http://www.lib.umn.edu/about/events/CollDev2000.html>.



Floating Holiday Closing

MINITEX and the University of Minnesota will be closed on Friday, March 30, 2000.

We have dedicated this month's *Reference Notes* to government resources.

"GPO Access" <http://www.access.gpo.gov/>

This is your one-stop point for federal government information. "GPO Access is a service of the U.S. Government Printing Office that provides free electronic access to a wealth of important information products produced by the Federal Government." This site gives you full-text search access to the Monthly Catalog of government publications. It includes links to your local federal depository library as well as "free on-line use of over 1,000 databases of Federal information in over 70 applications". The GPO databases include such materials as the *Congressional Record*, *Federal Register*, *Commerce Business Daily*, and the *Code of Federal Regulations*.

"Fedstats" <http://www.fedstats.gov/>

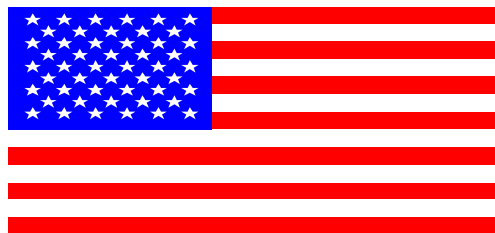
This site includes statistical information from more than 70 government agencies organized in a subject based A-Z index. The Fedstats site is maintained by the Federal Interagency Council. This site includes hotlinks that will take you directly to federal agencies, a Kid's Page, press releases, and regional statistics. It includes a scroll down menu of states that allows you to profile your state and county with something they call "Mapstats". Mapstats gives you state or county statistics for topics such as business, population, immigration, crime, and many more. It is a great place for one-stop statistical shopping.

"Federal Information Center" <http://fic.info.gov/>

The FIC was established in 1966 as a "single point of contact for people who have questions about Federal agencies, programs, and services". The Federal Information Center is primarily a telephone service. It responds to approximately two million calls per year via its toll-free number (800-688-9889). This site contains a clickable index of popular subjects like current consumer information, federal taxes, social security information, American travel abroad, workplace issues, and more. The FIC site assists in making the "maze of federal agencies approachable from numerous angles".

"Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids" <http://bensguide.gpo.gov>

This is a very well designed site, created by the Government Printing Office, that introduces children to how the government works. The first step one must take when using this site is to click on a grade range. The site is divided into sections aimed at age groups K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12, with a separate section for parents and teachers. It covers a wide range of materials including such topics as the U.S. Constitution, how laws are made, government branches, and citizenship. The site also includes a glossary, games and activities, and an "Ask Ben" email function for users to ask questions of Ben Franklin.



"Library of Congress" <http://www.loc.gov>

At the Library of Congress Web site you can visit their exhibits and digital library collections, check out their library services and research tools, and visit the Copyright Office for forms and information. This site includes the Library of Congress catalog as well as catalogs of other libraries. It also contains information and services for researchers, publishers, K-12 educators, blind and physically handicapped, and of course, federal libraries and information centers. The Library of Congress main page includes a link to the Thomas World Wide Web system that was developed in January of 1995. Thomas makes federal legislative information freely available to the public. It covers three major areas, legislation, congressional record, and committee information.

Reference Notes

MINITEX Library Information Network
University of Minnesota, 15 Andersen Library
222 21st Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455-0439

Reference Phone.....612-624-4150, WATS 800-462-5348
Main/Reference Fax.....612-624-4508

Beccone, Jean.....612-626-9843, becco001@tc.umn.edu
Friedmann, Beth.....612-624-7873, fried004@tc.umn.edu
Parker, Mary.....612-624-1024, m-park1@tc.umn.edu

Main Website.....www-minitex.lib.umn.edu
Reference Email.....ref@othello.lib.umn.edu
Office Hours.....Mon-Fri., 8:00am-4:30pm
Reference Intake Form.....
.....http://kinglear.lib.umn.edu/reference/refdb

North Star--Minnesota State Government On-line

<http://www.state.mn.us/>

For information on anything from Minnesota government to road conditions and ski and snowmobile trail information, the North Star Web site is the place to go. The government section of the North Star Web site contains information on “Minnesota government branches, agencies, offices and other publicly supported institutions”. Hotlinks immediately connect you to the corresponding departmental Web page. You can surf the Web from Minnesota library catalogs to state boards and commissions to city and county government.

PRINT RESOURCES

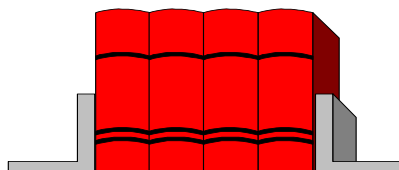
Tired of waiting for those Web pages to load? We took a look at some of the old standards to remind ourselves of their unique features.

United States Government Manual, 1999-2000 (ISBN 0160501172)

If you keep this in a ready reference collection, don't forget to reach for it the next time you need a copy of the Constitution or the Declaration of Independence. These two documents, along with descriptions of the Legislative, Judicial, and Executive departments of the federal government and their agencies, make this a most useful quick reference to the government in Washington D.C. Here you will find key names and telephone numbers, which makes this manual the essential tool for citizens wanting to know how to contact federal government officials.

Official Congressional Directory, 1999-2000 (ISSN 0160-9890)

Maps of the Capitol Building along with office locations for Congressional delegations will help visitors locate their representatives' or senators' offices. Biographies of congressional members and their committee assignments can be found here, as well as directory information about all Legislative offices. There are shorter entries for Executive and Judicial departments, a listing of foreign diplomatic offices in the U.S., and information about the official Press Galleries.



Congressional Quarterly's Washington Information Directory, 1999-2000 (ISBN 156802083x)

Do you want to find out what interest groups are located in or near Washington D.C. that will be involved in legislative, educational and lobbying activities on civil rights? The topical arrangement of this book will allow you to see quickly which government agencies, congressional committees and non-profit organizations are involved in certain issues. In addition, for those of us who are visual learners, there are box charts to show hierarchical and organizational relationships of government agencies.

Minnesota Legislative Manual, 1999/2000 (ISSN 1524-8038)

The state “Blue Book” is the place to go for a copy of the Minnesota Constitution, a chronology of key events in Minnesota history, Minnesota's official symbols and when they were adopted (the state muffin is blueberry – adopted in 1988), as well as information about state government offices and agencies. This is the place to start when trying to find election statistics. Statistical tables of election results are included.

Official Directory of the Minnesota Legislature, 1999-2000

This diminutive directory has pictures and biographies of Minnesota legislators along with their committee assignments. The House and Senate rules are published here. Its essential function is to serve as a directory of key names and telephone numbers for legislative matters in the state.

Minnesota Guidebook to State Agency Services, 1996-1999 (ISSN 1061-0987)

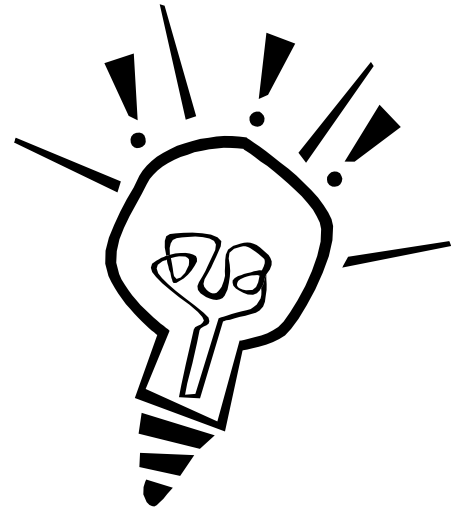
What are Minnesota's three distinct eco-systems? How many earthquakes have been recorded in Minnesota? What year was the University of Minnesota chartered? Where can you find the answers to these questions? There is a marvelous profile of Minnesota at the back of this book packed full of information about our state. This, in addition to its wealth of information about state agencies, commissions and bureaus describing their functions and services to the state's citizens, makes this guidebook an essential ready reference item.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Occasionally, MINITEX Reference Services receives a request for a poem, quotation, picture, story or something that cannot be found by checking standard sources. The Reference staff would like to appeal to the collective memory of MINITEX participants for assistance. Please forward any leads on the following questions to Reference Services at: **612-624-4150 or 800-462-5348**. Here is what we are looking for:

Looking for sheet music for the song "Thanks be to God for Roses Rare". We have not been able to verify the song title. (823)

Looking for information on the artist Louis Seybold. (847)



MINITEX Library Information Network

University of Minnesota

15 Andersen Library

222 21st Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN 55455-0439



do you think about *Reference Notes*?

great reference books



topics you would like addressed

fantastic web sites



spotlight on your
reference library

We would like to know what you would like to see in upcoming *Reference Notes*. Please either call us at 800-462-5348, send us an e-mail (see page 2 for addresses), or fill in your comments below and mail this form to MINITEX Reference.

Terrific web sites, reference books, and other sources you use:

Comments / Suggestions:

Name: (optional) _____

Library: (optional) _____ Phone: (optional) _____

**Reference Services
MINITEX Library Information Network
University of Minnesota
S-33 Wilson Library
309 19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455-0414**

1999 EVENTS CALENDAR

- June 5-10 **Special Library Association** will be holding their annual conference at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Please see their web site for more information: www.sla.org/conf/99conf/index.shtml
- June 16 **Academic Library Advocacy Day** at St. John's University in Collegeville, MN
- July 2, 1999 **National Literacy Day** Contact: Focus on Literacy, Inc., P.O. Box 504, Laurel Springs, NJ 08021