

## Clark County Law Library



Information to help  
you seek justice

# Annual Report 2011

*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 2011 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, 2011 through December 31, 2011.

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 Rich Melnick.

## Highlights of the Year

- 13% more reference questions than the previous year
- Ended year with expenses at 92% of budgeted amount
- Judge Melnick joined our board after Judge Bennett retired

## Our Patrons

The general public is the largest user group in the Law Library, and they asked 79% of the reference questions during the year. The paralegal program at Everest College uses 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, 2011, 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. Shepard's offers the ability to check to see if a cited case is still good law.

## Library Statistics

Currently, 42 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 | 21500 |
| Number of volumes added                  | 1106  |
| Number of volumes discarded              | 1085  |
| Total approximate volumes                | 21521 |
| Number on missing list                   | 42    |

### Circulation

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Items checked out            | 883 |
| Inter-Library Loans received | 20  |
| Inter-Library Loans sent     | 12  |
| Total items circulating      | 915 |

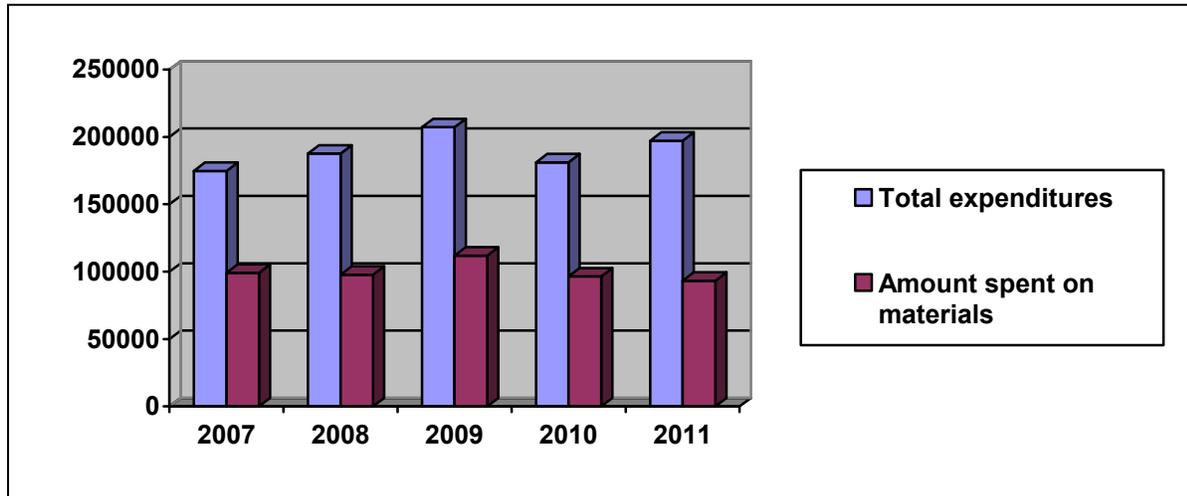
## Books and Print Materials

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 47% 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 2007 - 2011**



## Electronic Resources

The Westlaw subscription includes cases and statutes for all states and federal circuits, an extensive Washington database, and some secondary materials.

We also continue to offer Shepard's, a Lexis product, as an online subscription. This contract is the same from year to year and offers national Shepard's 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

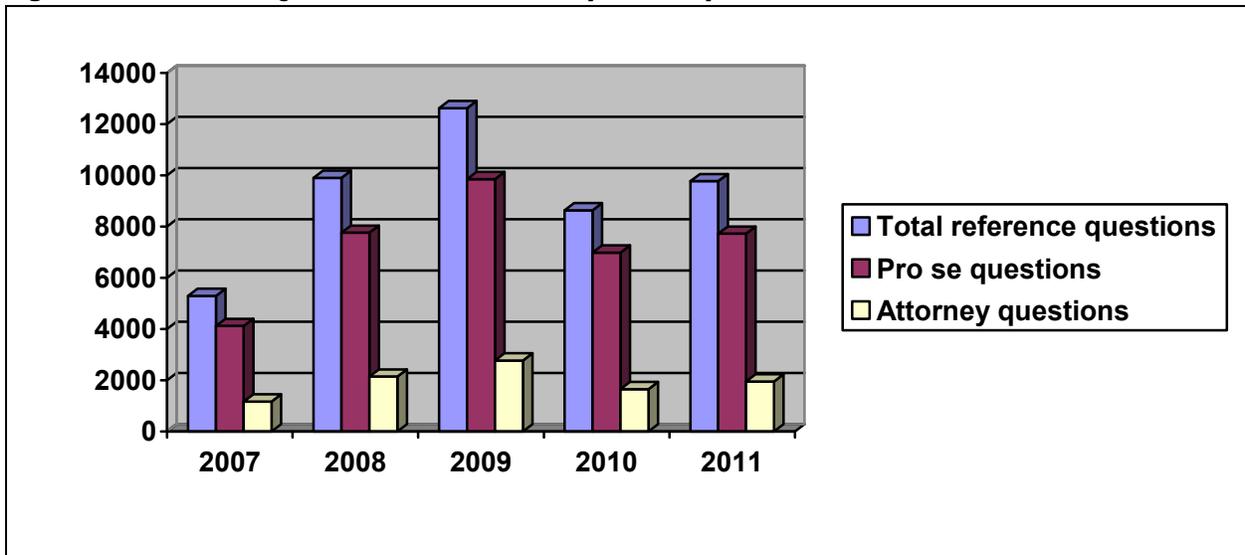
### A. Number of people through the door

This year we had 17,247 people through the door, including 14,586 during open hours and 32,661 during closed hours. (Attorneys with keycards can enter during closed hours so long as the building is open.)

### B. Reference questions

The Library answered 9,774 reference questions during 2011. Of the total questions, 79% came from pro se patrons (non-attorneys) with the rest (21%) coming from attorneys. This is a 13% increase in questions from the previous year. See Figure 2 on the next page.

**Figure 2: Reference Questions 2007 – 2011 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 2011, 883 items were checked out. Twelve items were sent and 20 items were received through interlibrary loan during this period.

### D. Inmate Requests

During the period covered by this report, the Library received 64 inmate requests. This is more than double last year.

## 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 2011, we received \$58,933 from District Court filing fees, and \$129,579 from Superior Court. This was an increase in filing fees of 7% from District Court and a decrease of 6% from Superior Court over 2010.

2. Investment interest. We earned \$1,405 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 \$14,889 in net revenues during the year.

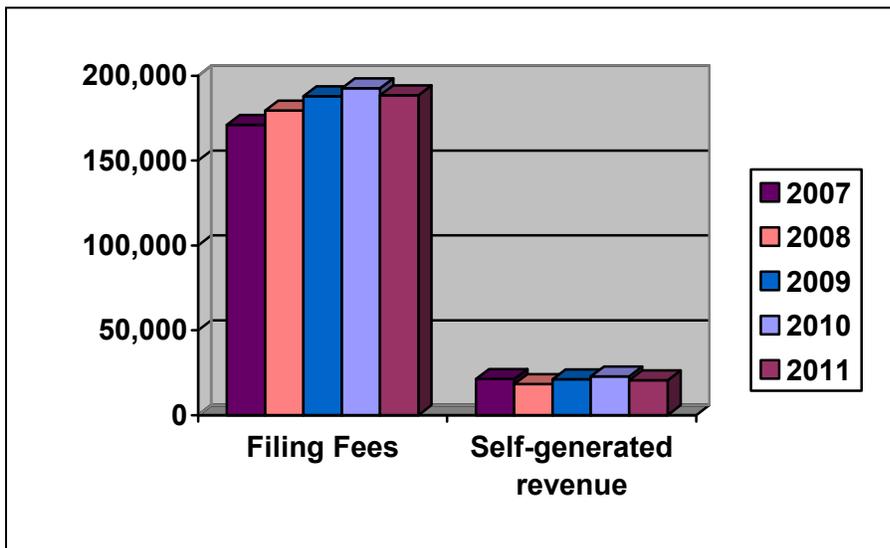
2. After-hours access keycards. We continue to charge attorneys for after-hours keycards, which raised \$2,250 in 2011.

3. Copier. We raised \$582 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 \$775 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 \$2,010 from the Jail during the year.

Total self-generated revenues: Our total self-generated revenues were \$20,506 for the year, a 10% decrease over 2010 and 10% of our total revenue. This decrease was due to fewer keycards and form packets sold, as well as a temporary loss of copier revenues due to a change in copier vendors.



**Figure 3: Law Library Income by Category 2007 - 2011**

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

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 2007 - 2011**

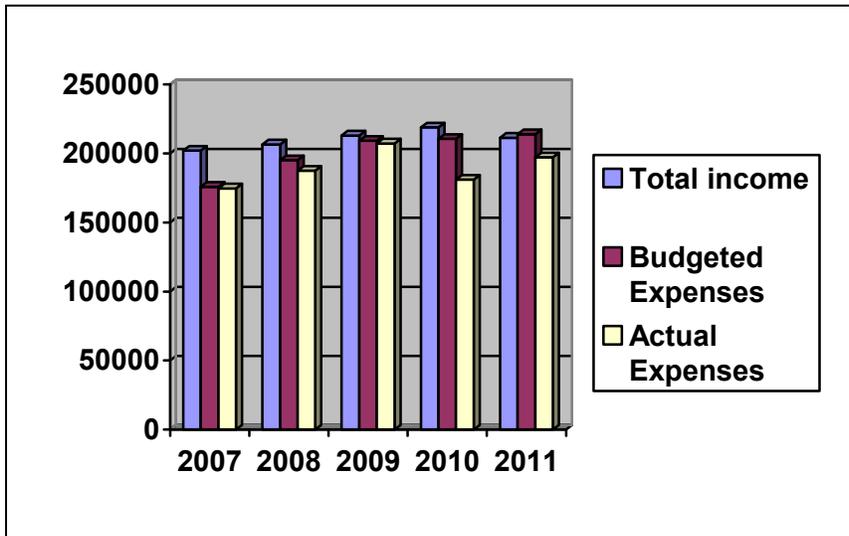


Figure 4 shows our total income compared with both budgeted and actual expenses for the last 5 years. However, because of corrections to paid time off accounts, our 2010 expenses are artificially low.

**Figure 5: Expenses for 2011**

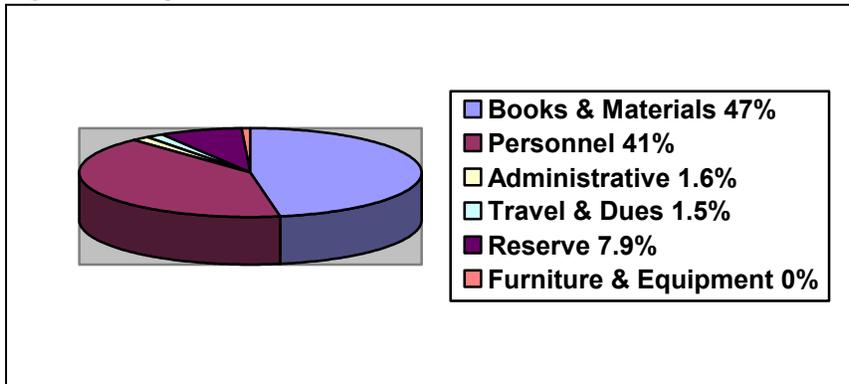
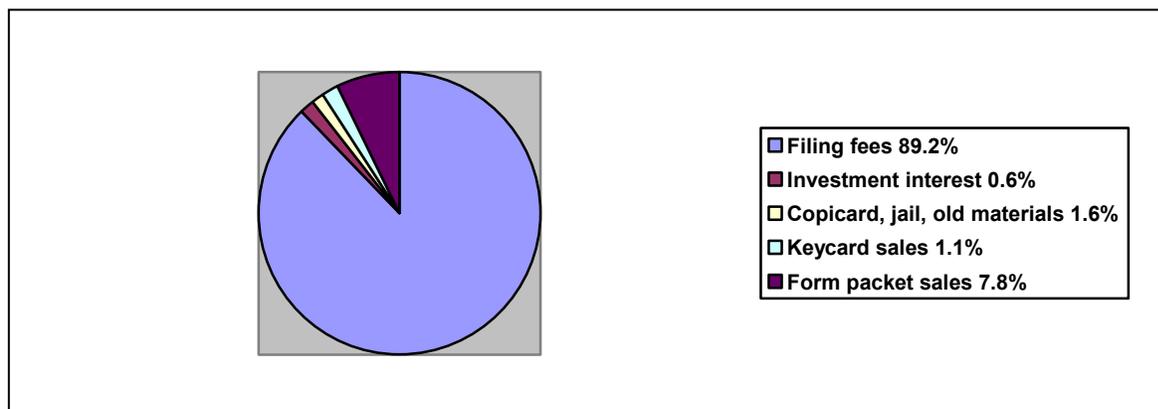


Figure 5 shows a chart of expenses by category. The greatest expense is books and materials. The reserve account is also partially for future purchases of books that are updated only periodically. Figure 6 below illustrates the percentages of our various revenue sources.

**Figure 6: Revenues for 2011 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 2011 Expense and Revenue Numbers**

| <u>Income</u>                   | <u>Budget</u>     | <u>Actual</u>     | <u>Percent of budget</u> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| District Court filing fees      | 54,000.00         | 58,933.00         | 109%                     |
| Superior Court filing fees      | 138,900.00        | 129,579.00        | 93%                      |
| Interest                        | 2,000.00          | 1,405.00          | 70%                      |
| Copcards                        | 1,200.00          | 582.00            | 49%                      |
| After hours access keycards     | 4,000.00          | 2,250.00          | 56%                      |
| Form packets (gross)            | 13,000.00         | 16,603.00         | 128%                     |
| Jail Law Library services       | 800.00            | 2,010.00          | 251%                     |
| <b>Income Subtotal</b>          | <b>213,900.00</b> | <b>211,362.00</b> | <b>99%</b>               |
| <b><u>Expenses</u></b>          |                   |                   |                          |
| Salaries                        | 67,360.00         | 57,775.00         | 86%                      |
| Employee benefits               | 24,296.00         | 23,805.00         | 98%                      |
| Books, materials, and databases | 98,500.00         | 93,178.00         | 95%                      |
| Office supplies and printing    | 2,500.00          | 2,599.00          | 104%                     |
| Temporary employment            | 1,000.00          | 470.00            | 47%                      |
| Telephone                       | 275.00            | 290.00            | 105%                     |
| Long distance travel/lodging    | 1,000.00          | 1,835.00          | 184%                     |
| Equipment maintenance/repair    | 500.00            | 54.00             | 11%                      |
| Computer maintenance            | 300.00            | 258.00            | 95%                      |
| Dues and conferences            | 1,500.00          | 1,261.00          | 84%                      |
| Furniture                       | 1,000.00          | 0.00              | n/a                      |
| Reserve account                 | 15,669.00         | 15,669.00         | 100%                     |
| <b>Expenses Subtotal</b>        | <b>213,900.00</b> | <b>197,194.00</b> | <b>92%</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 2011, staff attended meetings of the Washington Association of County Law Librarians (WACLL) and the American Association of Law Librarian 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 is moving through the recession with financial stability while seeking ways to better meet the needs of our patrons within our budget.

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:

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Meridee Pabst, Co-Chair

\_\_\_\_\_/8/20/12\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Rachel Brooks, Co-Chair

\_\_\_\_\_/8/20/12\_\_\_\_\_  
Date