



The Legal Resource Centre Annual Report

July 2007-June 2008



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Justice denied
anywhere diminishes
justice everywhere.

Martin Luther King, Jr

Message from the Director

This is our first full year of operation as the Legal Resource Centre and we are pleased to report a very successful year. Along with our regular programming, the LRC staff worked on nine projects. As a result, our staff has increased to 12, with 2 more vacancies still to be filled as of June.

Our ongoing programs experienced continued growth, showing an increase of 34% in visitors to our websites and a growth of 66% in our information and referral services. A similar increase in research and publication, as well as in public presentations, made for a busy and exciting year.

One of our most rewarding initiatives was the Canadian Law for Modern Day Foreign Brides website. Launched In March of 2008 in time for International Women's Day, the website was created in collaboration with Changing Together: A Centre for Immigrant Women, a non-profit organization run by immigrant women for immigrant women which aims to breakdown personal and systemic barriers so that women may fully participate in Canadian society. Funding for this important project was provided by the Alberta Law Foundation.

The added space in our new facility meant that we were able to undertake another important initiative. With support from the Sandra Garvie Memorial Fund, we were able to unpack the public legal education library which had been dormant for some time. The library contains PLE materials back to the 1980s and is an excellent research collection. In the upcoming year, we will begin to add new materials to the collection and will have an online catalog searchable by all PLE providers.

Thank you to our major funders:

Alberta Justice	Canada Revenue Agency
Alberta Law Foundation	The Muttart Foundation
Alberta Real Estate Foundation	Public Library Development Initiative

Also, a thank you to our many volunteer lawyers who write for *LawNow* magazine, who generously agree to review our materials for legal accuracy, and who support us in other ways. The LRC continues to benefit from a positive relationship with Professor Lois Gander and the Faculty of Extension at the University of Alberta.

I am continually grateful to the LRC staff, both those who have been with us through our transition year and the newcomers who have become so quickly dedicated to our mission.

Dr. Diane Rhyason
Executive Director



About The Legal Resource Centre

The mission of the Legal Resource Centre (LRC) is to enhance accessibility to the law by engaging people in lifelong learning about law and justice. The LRC has been a leader in using innovative technologies for public legal education. Since its inception in 1975, LRC has provided a range of innovative and cost-effective programs for delivering public legal education services.

Public legal education provides people with knowledge about the legal system and develops their knowledge of their rights and how to enforce them. It helps people to find out where and how to get help and advice. PLE also helps people develop the skills needed to anticipate and avoid problems. Improved knowledge and awareness of the law and the justice system helps build a sense of citizenship.

Thank you for taking the time to read and provide some resources for me. I appreciate your help and promptness in this matter. These links I'm sure will be helpful in resolving my situation.

Online reference

The information you have provided is wonderful and I will do some more research on this overwhelming situation.

Online reference

Highlights

- Over 900 questions from the public were answered through our information and referral service
- Staff presented 14 seminars and workshops to a variety of audiences
- Over 11,000 publications and information items were distributed.
- Over 1.5 million users visited our websites, an increase of 34% over last year
- Over 8 million pages of information were downloaded, an increase of 29% over last year
- *LawNow* subscribers can now renew online
- The Legal Resource Centre created page on Facebook.
- Canadian Law for Modern Day Foreign Brides was listed in Wikipedia.
- Implementation of Google Statistics has meant much more information about our site users

I ♥ ACJNet!!!

Fan of the Legal Resource Centre Facebook group

Website Statistics 2007-2008

Users:	1.5 million (up 34% from last year)
Pageviews:	8 million (up 29% from last year)
Hits:	23 million (up 15% from last year)



Access to Justice Network

ACJNet is Canada's access to justice portal. It serves as a clearinghouse of electronic resources that address a myriad of legal and justice matters. It includes sub-portals dealing with resources of particular interest to Albertans and with those available in French.

Highlights

- Staff responded to over 900 public queries, an increase of 66%. The most popular topics continue to be landlord/tenant, labour/employment, and marriage/family.
- Six electronic newsletters were sent out to 200 subscribers.
- An electronic version of *Women and the Law in Alberta* developed by the Calgary Women Lawyers group was posted to ACJNet.
- Special topics resources were developed on Rent Controls, Grandparents Rights, Canadian Security, Dual Citizenship, Internet Safety, and Gangs & Gang-Related Crime in Alberta.
- RSS feeds were added to ACJNet National, Alberta, and Français.
- Six polls were run on ACJNet and ACNetAlberta.
- Over 10,000 live records are now in the ACJNet database.
- Close to 200 events were added to the ACJNet listings.
- Over 200 new websites and/or resource links were added.
- Over 1000 news items added to ACJNet, ACJNetAlberta, and ACJNetFrancaise.
- About 50 new websites or PLE services were featured on each of the three sites.
- Visitors to the site came from 142 different countries.

Just a quick note to say thank you for the honour of being featured on your website.

Alberta Aboriginal Legal Education Centre

Over 2000 organizations worldwide link to www.acjnet.org from their own website

Top 5 referring sites to ACJNet:

- Lancaster House (Labour Law On-line)
- Service Alberta
- About.com
- LawLine
- Canadian Encyclopedia

Top 5 pages through which users entered ACJNet:

- The National homepage
- The Splash page
- Legislative Materials by Jurisdiction
- Alberta Representing Yourself
- The French homepage

Polls on ACJNet National and Alberta included questions about:

- Pay-before-you-pump legislation
- Fixed date elections
- Seat belts on school buses
- Violence against pregnant women

Website Statistics 2007-2008

Users:	570,222
Pageviews:	2,372,487
Hits:	7,900,357

Staff at CPL make extensive use of ACJNet as a tool for legal information and for demonstrating to our customers how they can find basic information on many legal topics. It's a tremendous resource!

*Jerry Fawcett
Calgary Public Library*

I had a look this morning [at the ACJNet feature site] and was very pleased, as were others here who have worked on it. We really appreciate your help in getting the word out about this helpful new resource.

*Judy Powell
Journals Manager/Digitization Project Coordinator
University of Calgary Press*



A-Link: Alberta's Law-related Information Network

Jointly funded by Alberta Justice and the Alberta Law Foundation, A-Link is a searchable, online directory of public legal education and information organizations in Alberta. The online directory contains standard directory information, along with descriptions of services and programs offered; geographical areas served; and contact information. It also features a glossary, ensuring users are able understand legal terms they come across. The directory also has a members-only component where organizations can update their records and add information.

A-Link includes information about 269 organizations and agencies that provide legal information or services to the Alberta public. Its interactive map allows users to easily search for organizations in their region. Alberta Justice has provided funds to develop a print feature that will allow organizations to print off copies of directory listings by topic or geographical location.



Canadian Legal FAQs

Canadian Legal FAQs provides short, clear answers to legal questions related to provincial law and to federal law applicable to Albertans.

Highlights

- The website underwent a major renovation transferring the content to a Wiki format.
- The new site provides easier access to the French language version of questions.
- During the year, 162 new or revised FAQs were added to the site, with another 153 in development.
- New topics included wills, power of attorney, personal directives, labour and employment, and temporary foreign workers.
- The site received over 320,000 visitors, an increase of 22% over the previous year.
- Visitors read an average of 7.7 pages when they came to the site.

Website Statistics 2007-2008

Users:	324,908
Pageviews:	1,337,981
Hits:	2,542,840





The Family Violence Sites

The Legal Resource Centre has developed a suite of websites dealing with family violence. It also participates in collaborative projects that enhance the awareness and impact of those sites. The maintenance and upkeep of these sites is part of the core activity of LRC. The number of visitors to the site increased by 24% over the previous year, with over 200,000 visitors.



Website Statistics RoseNet Law & Abused Immigrant Women

Users: 145,127
Pageviews: 74,285
Hits: 250,637



Website Statistics VIOLET Law & Abused Women

Users: 191,515
Pageviews: 89,855
Hits: 594,437



Website Statistics Oak-Net Abuse of Older Adults

Users: 79,362
Pageviews: 47,949
Hits: 248,170

Canadian Law for Modern Day Foreign Brides

Developed in collaboration with Changing Together, the website was launched in March 2008. Press coverage was received from across Canada. By June, over 10,000 users had visited the site.



Because it's web-based, [the Canadian Law & Modern Day Foreign Brides site] can be a valuable source of information for foreign brides before they come to Canada, or after they arrive. Those in rural areas without a lot of support services for immigrants could also benefit.

Anne-Marie Tobin
"Wedding dress, plane ticket, list of dos and don'ts"
Canadian Press, March 7, 2008

Website Statistics (10 months)

Users: 30,316
Pageviews: 10,248
Hits: 1,223,678

Canada can be a bewildering, even frightening place for immigrant women who arrive as mail-order or Internet brides, but now they have a new Web site to help smooth the transition.

Natalie Armstrong
"Canadian Web site aims to help mail-order brides"
Reuters, March 13, 2007

I've just had a chance to look at the Law for Foreign Brides website. It's excellent - what a lot of work has gone into this! Thanks so much for taking this important initiative.

User



Residential Tenancies

The Residential Tenancies program is funded by the Alberta Real Estate Foundation (AREF). During the year, staff continued to concentrate on promotion and training initiatives. These initiatives were geared towards various sectors of the real estate industry and public legal education. Public libraries were specifically targeted.

Highlights

- The number of visitors to the site doubled from the previous year to over 310,000.
- Over 7500 items were mailed out to Albertans. Several thousand more were handed out at seminars and conference conducted to train both the public and intermediaries on how best to use the web resource.
- Over 400 questions were answered from site users. New FAQs were created if the questions were repeated frequently.
- The website was regularly updated to adjust for changes in regulations.
- Awarded an Alberta Consumer Champion Award of Distinction by Service Alberta in conjunction with the Alberta Real Estate Foundation.

In 2000, a Legal Studies Program study found that the relationship between landlords and tenants would be improved if more educational resources were available. The Alberta Real Estate Foundation agreed to fund a web-based learning resource. The result is <http://www.landlordandtenant.org/> - an easy-to-use website with more than 1,000 pages of user-friendly information about renting a home in Alberta... It is the only website of its kind in Canada.

Service Alberta press release announcing the LRC's Alberta Consumer Champion Award of Distinction

Website Statistics 2008

Hits:	8,556,414
Pageviews:	314,393
Users:	2,841,415

Laws for Landlords in Alberta



Laws for Tenants in Alberta



By the way, love the [Landlord and Tenant] site, very clear.

User



Not-For-Profit & Charity Law

As of year end, the Not-for-Profit & Charity Law website was in the middle of a major redesign funded as part of a larger project by the Charities Directorate of Revenue Canada.

Website Statistics

Hits:	392,537
Pageviews:	58,136
Users:	137,705

Sandra Garvie Memorial Collection

The Sandra Garvie Memorial Collection Project aims to bring together and make accessible a collection of historical materials that document the development and history of public legal education in Canada. These items were collected by the Legal Resource Centre from the emergence of the practice of public legal education in the early 1970's to the mid-1990's.

The wide range of materials includes:

- research;
- evaluations;
- program reports;
- journals and newsletters;
- handbooks about how to teach the law;
- guides for students and manuals for teachers in school programs; and
- samples of public legal education materials, e.g. educational kits including mock trial kits, descriptions of educational activities/games, curriculum guides, legal information pamphlets, bibliographies, and promotional material for programs or resources.

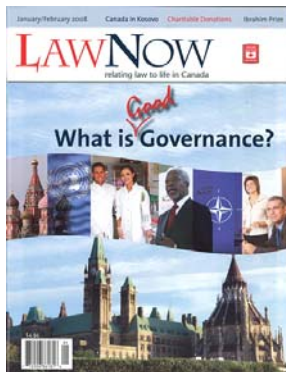
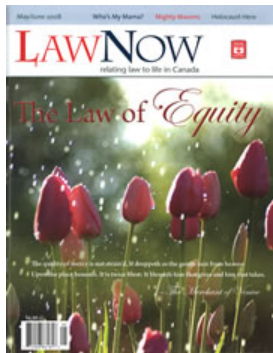
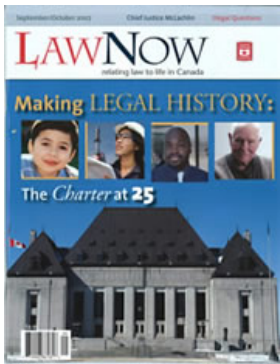


LawNow

LawNow strives to provide credible legal information, interpretation, and comment to help Canadians understand the law and its relation to everyday life. The publication team includes lawyers, writers, law librarians, educators, and editors. We are grateful to our contributors (over 45 lawyers and other professionals) who supported **LawNow** by article and column contributions.

Highlights

- Subscriptions and renewals can now be done online through PayPal.
- Topics covered in this year included environmental law, the *Charter*, consumer law, equity law, and citizenship.
- Copies were distributed at Law Day in Vancouver and Victoria, as well as around Alberta, at the Canadian and Alberta Library Conferences, as well as at conferences of the Alberta Mediation Society and the Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton.
- **LawNow** articles were reprinted by High Beam Encyclopedia, Ontario Ministry of Education, the Max Plank Institute in Germany, Philosophy 201 course at Camoson College, the Senate at McMaster University, and Cengage Learning.
- **LawNow** participated in RAMM (Read Alberta Magazines Month), a promotional blitz coordinated by the Alberta Magazine Publishers Association.
- **LawNow** bounce rates are only 12%, which means that site visitors stay to use the site. The average user stays on the site over 9 minutes and looks at an average of 9 pages of information.



I really appreciate the diversity of themes [in LawNow]. The topics also extend my thinking about what I should be concerned about. I often pass along articles to people who would appreciate that particular focus. I feel I learn from every issue.

*Wendy Macdonald
Grant MacEwan College*





Research & Community Engagement

Articles/Publications

Charity Law in Canada: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Resources. 2nd Edition (March 2008). Legal Resource Centre

The Role and Impact of Librarians in the History and Development of Public Legal Education in Canada – A Literature Review and Annotated Bibliography. (May 2008). Legal Resource Centre.

Protecting Yourself from Consumer Fraud and Scams – a Guide to Resources. June 2008. Legal Resource Centre

Making a Will. May 2008. Legal Resource Centre.

Making a Power of Attorney. May 2008. Legal Resource Centre.

Making a Personal Directive. May 2008. Legal Resource Centre.

Student Housing: a Needs Assessment Report. October 2007. Legal Resource Centre (unpublished).

Condominiums: a Needs Assessment Report. October 2007. Legal Resource Centre (unpublished).

Immigration to Alberta: a Needs Assessment Report. October 2007. Legal Resource Centre (unpublished).

Land Use Planning in Alberta: a Needs Assessment Report. October 2007. Legal Resource Centre (unpublished).

Section 2(d): Freedom of Association. A background memo for Alberta teachers. January 2008. Legal Resource Centre (unpublished). To be published on ABC LawNet next year.

Section 6: Mobility Rights. A background memo for Alberta teachers. January 2008. Legal Resource Centre (unpublished). To be published on ABC LawNet next year.

Section 8: Search and Seizure. A background memo for Alberta teachers. January 2008. Legal Resource Centre (unpublished). To be published on ABC LawNet next year.

Section 15: Equality. A background memo for Alberta teachers. January 2008. Legal Resource Centre (unpublished). To be published on ABC LawNet next year.

Presentations

Aippersbach, C. *Introduction to Law for Librarians.* Presentations to new LRC staff for training purposes (April, May, June 2008).

Aippersbach, C. *Planning for the Future: Making Powers of Attorney, Personal Directives and Wills.* Presentation to internal LRC staff for training purposes (May 2008).

Aippersbach, C. *Planning for the Future: Making Powers of Attorney, Personal Directives and Wills.* Presentation to seniors of Strathcona County and Fort Saskatchewan (May 2008).

Aippersbach, C. and Rhyason, D. *Finding The Law that Rules.* Presentation at the yearly conference of the Public Legal Education Network of Alberta (June 2008).

Aippersbach, C. and Wurmman, K. *Introduction to Law for Librarians.* Presentation to librarians of Strathcona County and Fort Saskatchewan (April 2008).

Aippersbach, C. and Wurmman, K. *Planning for the Future: Making Powers of Attorney, Personal Directives and Wills.* Presentation to librarians of Strathcona County and Fort Saskatchewan (June 2008).

Doyle, M. *Helping Patrons Find Legal Information.* Presentation at the Parkland Regional Library Conference (May 2008).

Wurmman, K. *Consumer Protection.* Presentation to seniors of Fort Saskatchewan (May 2008). Co-presentation with Wise Owls.

Wurmman, K. *Finding Legal Resources Online.* YWCA Training Session (October 2007).

Wurmman, K. Invited guest speaker to LIS 592: Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility in Libraries at SLIS, University of Alberta (March 2008).

Wurmman, K. Legal Resource Centre Poster Presentation at Canadian Library Association Annual Conference (May 2008).

Wurmman, K. *Landlord and Tenant Law Info Session.* University of Alberta (October 2007). Co-presentation with Student Legal Services.

Wurmman, K. *Residential Tenancy Issues.* Presentation to seniors of Fort Saskatchewan (May 2008). Co-presentation with Service Alberta.

Wurmman, K. *Walking the Walk, Talking the Talk.* Panel presentation at Canadian Library Association Annual Conference (May 2008).



Projects

Projects funded during the year included:

- Alberta Justice – A-Link project
- Alberta Justice – Grade six social studies project (3 year)
- Alberta Law Foundation – Law for Alberta Schools website (3 years)
- Alberta Real Estate Foundation – Residential Tenancies project
- Charities Directorate, Canada Revenue Agency – Resources for charities in Canada
- Changing Together— Website development for Law for Modern Internet Brides
- Muttart Foundation – Privacy Act review
- Sandra Garvie Memorial Fund – Historical library collection
- Public Library Development Initiative – Seniors and the law project

Committees

- Aippersbach, C. Committee for Coordination of Resources for Temporary Foreign Workers in Alberta
- Doyle, M. (Co-Chair) AALT 2009 Conference Planning Committee
- Rhyason, D. Alberta Mapping Project Advisory Committee
- Rhyason, D. (Chair) ARTAC, Education Subcommittee
- Rhyason, D. (Chair) ATRAC, Working Group on low literacy issues
- Rhyason, D. (Chair) Justice Policy Advisory Committee, Law-Related Education
- Rhyason, D. (Director) PLEAC Board
- Rhyason, D and Wurmman, K. Edmonton PLEI Working Group (2007-2008)
- Wurmman, K. (Chair) Greater Edmonton Library Association, Prison Subcommittee
- Wurmman, K. School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS), Admissions Advisory Committee (2008)
- Wurmman, K. School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS), Partners Week participant (November 2007)

Exhibits

- March 2008— Safer Communities Forum
- April 2008— Alberta Library Conference
- May 2008— Law Day
- June 2008— Vitalize Conference



Staff as of June 30, 2008

Diane Rhyason, PhD – Executive Director
Carole Aippersbach, BA, MA, LLB – Lawyer
Kirsten Wurmman, BA, MLIS – Web Librarian
Marilyn Doyle – Library Technician
Any Liu – Library Clerk
Vincent Chu, BSc – Web Specialist
Tracie Teall – Accounting Assistant
Teresa Mitchell, BA, LLB – Editor, *LawNow*
Tanya Driechel, BA, MLIS – Community Programmer
Lucas Mitchell, BA – Program Assistant
Lesley Conley – Project Assistant
San San Sy, BComm, MSc Ed – Project Coordinator

Board of Directors

President Dr. Anna Altmann
Vice President Dr. Lorna Stefanick
Secretary Evelyn David
Treasurer Dan McKinley
Charles Gardner, Q.C.
Howard Sapers
Peter Freeman, Q.C.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

Sources of Funding

Alberta Law Foundation	465, 391
Grants and Contracts	491, 940
Sales Revenue (LawNow)	<u>51, 358</u>
Total Funding	1, 008, 689

Financial statement available online at
<http://www.legalresourcecentre.ca>