

# Rx Docs Prescriptions

The Newsletter of the Government Documents  
Round Table of Ohio



Issue 52

Fall 2000

## To the Members:

Margaret S. Powell, President  
The College of Wooster

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Almost twenty years ago, the depository library community in Ohio received a letter from two colleagues proposing the formation of a state documents organization and asking if we might be interested in participating in such an organization. Being relatively new to this particular community of library staff members, we at Wooster were among many who were enthusiastic about a new opportunity to meet with others "in the same boat" to share ideas, problems, and solutions. Ohio GODORT was born. Since that time, we have covered many miles together, meeting twice each year at a variety of interesting locations in Ohio, coming together with others from similar organizations in nearby states as well as gathering for meals together during national conferences and at meetings of the Depository Library Council. We have worn out one Constitution and adopted a second, formed and unformed many committees, written countless letters in an effort to convince Congress to look favorably upon the Federal Depository Library Program, and have grown to depend on each other for advice, assistance, and friendship. Along the way those who were mentored have

become mentors themselves; we networked before it was a commonly accepted term and we have continued to grow in confidence and experience. I am proud of the presence which Ohio depository libraries have, both in this state and at the national level, and look forward to another year of putting Ohio squarely on the depository library map.

Today we are faced with deeper uncertainties and challenges at the national level than we have endured in the past twenty years. Currently on temporary and continuing resolution for funding in this new fiscal year, GPO is operating at last year's budget level, but they will face more drastic cuts in the program when Congress passes the current appropriations legislation. At this point, the level funding, which has characterized the steady decline in federal support for GPO/LPS for many years, looks a lot better than the proposed severe cuts to the program actually promised for this year. Last spring, during the appropriations hearings, grassroots lobbying efforts, including our letters of outrage, had a definite effect on the continuance of the Federal Depository Library Program. In more pessimistic moments questions remain in the back of my mind. For how long will we be able to sustain this program with declining funding? What would such an underfunded program look like? Would the

program survive? What would be left if it did not survive and how would we respond to that challenge? Government information or its necessity to a democratic society will not disappear even if the traditional structure for its dissemination does. When will we effect a real change in the perceived importance of this kind of program of public access?

As we have been immersed in the waters of the "electronic transition" for several years, it really comes as no surprise that this flood will now accelerate. Now there are more questions. I wonder when we will be able to convince lawmakers of what is actually appropriate in electronic format and what is not? How can we demonstrate to Congress that electronic is not necessarily cheaper than traditional tangible formats? And when will we be able to count on authentic and permanent public access for electronic government information? Most of the implications of an electronic environment for government information are already clear to current depository library staff members and have been clear since the beginning of the CD-ROM revolution and the early days of this current transition. We are still struggling with, and sometimes against, rapid and far reaching technological change, which has become a permanent feature of our everyday lives. Continuous technological change has impacted or will impact most aspects of traditional library service, structure, and activities as well. These are, indeed, interesting times, and it is vital that organizations like Ohio GODORT remain a strong source of support and counsel for each of us now as we grapple with these questions and others and move into an uncertain but definitely challenging era.

My thanks to the members of the previous Board, Mark Gooch and Nicole Eby, who have handed the new Board a strong and vigorous organization, which will continue

to working from their service. I look forward to working this year with Barbara Kussow, Ohio's one and only regional librarian, Heidi Good, our new Program Chair/President-elect, and our new Secretary-Treasurer, Jan Schnall. Karen Kimber provides additional continuity as the continuing editor of our newsletter. I know it will be an interesting year and one which will pass smoothly and all too fast.

Plans are now set for our fall meeting on November 10 at the Dayton and Montgomery County Public Library, with Nicole Eby hosting. Heidi's program sounds interesting and well-suited to an Ohio audience. I regret that the meeting date is a holiday for many of us who work in public sector institutions. We hope that those of you with a choice on how to spend the day will decide to spend it with us.



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## From the Editor

Karen Kimber  
Wright State University

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As Margie Powell's President's column points out, this issue of *Docs Prescriptions* comes at a crucial time in the history of federal depository libraries. Carol Singer has written a timely article, aptly subtitled "How Did We Get Here?" which reviews the past twenty-plus years of growing electronic access to government information. I'm sure you will find it as fascinating as I did.

Because of its length, this issue does not have its usual complement of news about Ohio documents people. It's certainly not because there has been a lack of activity! Look for Ohio news in the next issue.

## **Docs Prescriptions**

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*Docs Prescriptions* is available on the GODORT  
of Ohio Web page at:

[http://www2.kenyon.edu/people/goochm/  
godort/index.html](http://www2.kenyon.edu/people/goochm/godort/index.html)

## **Minutes**

Spring Meeting • May 19, 2000  
State Library of Ohio

Meeting called to order at 1:45 p.m.

Minutes of the fall meeting at Hiram College, November 19, 1999, were approved. Motion was made by Coleen Parmer and seconded by George Lucas.

### **Treasurer's Report - Nicole Eby**

There is \$748.99 in the treasury. Dues are collected today and are now set at \$20.00 per year, payable from spring meeting to spring meeting.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Membership Committee**

Diane May - Copies of brochures were shown. Brochure will be updated to reflect the names of the new officers. Coleen Parmer announced that she finished updating the directory of Ohio Depository Libraries, which is linked from Ohio GODORT page. She also added email and homepage links. She will contact other libraries to increase members.

### **Access to State Government Information and Publications**

There is a proposed revision to ORC 149.11. Comments regarding this legislation can be sent to Mr. J. Buchman at the State Library. Coleen Parmer distributed copies of the letter she sent to Mr. Buchman. Below is a summary of her remarks. In her opinion, the proposed draft is fine as far as electronic information is concerned and is long overdue. It details how distribution would be handled. It is proposed that agencies must notify the State library when anything is taken off their Web pages. When an agency has an electronic product (CD-ROM), only 1 to 5 copies are required to go to the State Library, and this is not enough. Coleen has some concerns about the exception made for

the distribution of General Assembly material.

Members were encouraged to read the proposed revision of the law on the State Library home page and send comments. We need action from Ohio GODORT and the membership. Since this bill has not yet been introduced, comments would be appropriate. Information on State Library homepage address is on the front page of the latest *Docs Prescriptions*.

This committee is looking for a new member since Melanie Putnam has left OSU.

#### **Newsletter**

Karen Kimber encouraged everyone to send articles or ideas for articles. Anything related to government documents is appropriate.

The spring newsletter total cost (printing, mailing) was \$72.73.

#### **OhioLINK Issues**

In the absence of Karen Kottsy, a message was read. CIRM Committee met in May. Various databases (Congressional Universe, Academic Universe, Ohio Capitol Connection) and their costs have been examined. It was decided to keep Ohio Capitol Connection for one more year.

#### **State Plan**

According to Barbara Kussow, the State Plan is coming together. Mary Prophet has sent a collection development draft. Information on consortia, government documents, geographical divisions, and Ohio depositories is included. Some portions of the State Plan still need to be refined.

#### **GODORT of Ohio e-mail list and Homepage.**

Both the email list and the homepage have moved and are now located at Kenyon. The old homepage will stay in place for another

month. Members need to subscribe to the new address. For the moment, archives are not available. Email should be sent to Mark Gooch if there is a problem in subscribing to the "new" list.

Mark Gooch was commended for his savvy and expertise.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **Honorary membership for George Barnum and Francis Buckley**

Before the subject of honorary membership for George Barnum and Francis Buckley could be decided, By-law 9 needed to be modified and changes approved. Motion made by Evron Collins to approve the modified by-law 9, seconded by Coleen Parmer. Unanimous approval.

Motion made by Mark Gooch and seconded by Carol Singer, to bestow honorary membership to George Barnum and Francis Buckley. Motion carried.

##### **Status of affiliation with ALA GODORT**

Jill Vassilakos-Long was contacted. There does not seem to be a clear process for affiliation with ALA-GODORT. As requested, Mark Gooch sent a letter stating the intent of our purpose and membership. Our affiliation was approved.

##### **Dues issues in Constitution**

Two changes need to be made in our newly approved by-laws regarding dues. In BYLAW 2: MEMBERSHIP DUES, SECTION 1, the text should be amended to read: "The dues for Ohio GODORT shall be \$20.00/year." In BYLAW 2: MEMBERSHIP DUES, SECTION 3, the text should be amended to read: "Dues for Ohio GODORT may be changed as needed and shall be determined by a 2/3 vote of the membership present at any meeting of Ohio GODORT and shall take effect at the next Spring meeting." Motion made by Evron Collins to accept changes and seconded by Coleen Parmer.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Nominating Committee Report**

Karen Kimber, chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of candidates and thanked them for volunteering to serve. Heidi Good (University of Dayton) agreed to run for Program Chair/President-Elect and Jan Schnall (Youngstown State) for Secretary/Treasurer. There were no nominations from the floor. Motion made by Evron Collins to accept the nominations. Seconded by Peggy Lewis. Motion carried.

### **Report on the Federal Depository Library Council meeting**

Margie Powell was one of two persons from Ohio to attend the Federal Depository Library Council meeting in Newport R.I. and reported on its work. GPO announced that it was pulling its active support of the Gateway sites. According to the GPO, these sites have outlived their usefulness and have been replaced by GPO Access. Margie also reported that GPO and LPS are going to issue new specifications and are revising public service guidelines but will give time to libraries to implement them. The Monthly CD-ROM Cataloguing will be phased out.

### **Report on the Digital Library Symposium**

Barbara Kussow reported on the April 14 meeting at Case Western Reserve. The discussion included: networking future, faster speed, more sophistication, new network management, shift from telephone to wireless and faster communication. George Barnum talked about the digital library concept.

### **Proposed GPO Funding Cuts**

The proposed GPO funding cut of 61% would virtually eliminate the FDLP. The Senate appropriation committee presentation has been delayed. The "saving grace" might be that this bill also includes a cut in the Capitol police force. Now is the time to express our opinion by writing letters to

newspaper editors. Letters and telephone calls are most effective, email should not be used. Suggestions for individual members actions: contact own representative and senators and mail letters.

We need to do something as an organization and should target the members of the Appropriations Committee. Motion was made by Coleen Parmer that the president of Ohio GODORT draft a letter and send it to the Appropriations Committee. Motion seconded by Carol Singer.

### **Venue, program ideas, and date for fall meeting**

Nicole Berendsen, Barbara Kussow and Audrey Hall were thanked for hosting the meeting.

Possible dates for the Fall meeting are: October 27, November 3 or 10. Nicole Eby said the Dayton and Montgomery County Public Library would gladly host the fall meeting.

Program ideas for the Fall meeting should be sent to the Committee and the new program chair, Heidi Good.

### **Other Announcements**

Evron Collins announced that Bowling Green is now a Canadian depository. Canada has its own classification system. Coleen Parmer has catalogued the items.

Audrey Hall reminded us that Ohio documents are on the Web.

As far as the State Library move is concerned, no details are available at this time.

### **Turning over the gavel**

The gavel was turned over to the new President and the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nicole Eby  
Secretary/Treasurer

# The Depository System Transition From Paper to Electronic: How Did We Get Here?

Carol A. Singer  
Bowling Green State University

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**late 1970's:** Librarians were becoming aware that U.S. government agencies were producing electronic products that the libraries wanted, but these were not being included in the depository program. In 1979, the American Library Association passed a resolution calling for a revision to the law that governs the depository program to require that all formats be included in the program.

**1980:** The Depository Library Council passed the first of its resolutions asking that depository libraries have access to government electronic data.

**1982:** The Government Printing Office (GPO) General Counsel, Garrett E. Brown, Jr., issued an opinion stating that electronic information must be included in the depository program only if it had previously been published as a paper document.

**1983:** The Chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing (JCP), Senator Charles Mathias, authorized the formation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Depository Library Access to Federal Automated Data Bases.

**1985:** The Ad Hoc Committee made its final report, *Provision of Federal Government Publications in Electronic Format to Depository Libraries*, which recommended that electronic government information be disseminated to depositories. It also recommended that the government fund some pilot projects to test the dissemination of electronic data. The JCP held an open forum to discuss the report. The results of the forum were published as *An Open Forum on the Provision of Electronic Federal Information to Depository Libraries*.

The Commerce Department was already making the Economic Bulletin Board available to subscribers, but it was not part of the Depository Program.

**1987:** The JCP asked GPO to implement the pilot projects that had been recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee. The Public Printer, Ralph Kennickell, Jr., created the Information Technology Program (ITP) to carry out the pilot projects. An ITP position was funded and filled, but there were no further appropriations.

The U.S. Census Bureau sold *Census Test Disc No. 1*, but it was not included in the Depository Program.

**1988:** GPO began selling government information in electronic formats. The JCP asked GPO to plan the pilot projects that had been recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee without receiving any additional funding. The *Census Test Disc No. 2* was sent to a test group of depositories.

GPO released *Dissemination of Information in Electronic Format to Federal Depository Libraries*. The Office of Technology Assessment issued *Informing the Nation: Federal Information Dissemination in an Electronic Age*. The Selective Interest Group on CD-ROM (SIGCAT), found that 24 federal agencies were each working on at least one CD-ROM project, but only 7 of these fell within the scope of the depository program.

The General Accounting Office, a Congressional agency, reported that 94% of regional depositories and 82% of selective depositories had microcomputers with modems. 71% of regionals and 37% of selectives had access to equipment to use CD-ROMs.

**1989:** The GPO General Counsel, Grant G. Moy, Jr., issued an opinion that GPO had the authority to disseminate electronic information via the depository program. Congress approved five pilot projects proposed by the Information Technology Program: *Census Test Disc No. 2* on CD-ROM, the *Toxic Release Inventory* on CD-ROM, the *Economic Bulletin Board*, the Department of Energy's *Scientific and Technical Information* online, and the *1985 Congressional Record* on CD-ROM. The GPO created an Electronic Distribution Task Force. For the first time, federal depositories had the opportunity to select items that included CD-ROM titles and electronic information general classes.

*Census Test Disc No. 2* was sent to all depositories. According to a survey published in

1992, 57% of libraries were dissatisfied with the disc's software.

The Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Geological Survey offered a CD-ROM, *Joint Earth Sciences (JES-2)*, to depositories on a first-come, first-served basis. The disc was a demonstration of uses for the USGS Side-Looking Airborne Radar Program and the first disc available to depositories that contained image files, although it was not available as a depository item.

**1990:** GPO distributed the *1985 Congressional Record* on CD-ROM. The disc included the text, but not the tables or graphic materials from the paper version. GPO's *Project Hermes Bulletin Board* began to offer access to U.S. Supreme Court opinions. It was initially available to regional depositories and law libraries. The Environmental Protection Agency's *Toxic Release Inventory* was sent to depositories on CD-ROM. One hundred sites had access to the Commerce Department's *Electronic Bulletin Board* as part of a test project.

A survey of depositories found that 74% of all depositories had computers with CD-ROM drives.

**1991:** GPO began distributing the TIGER/Line CD-ROMs, the first depository CD-ROMs that contained only raw data. Depositories had to purchase GIS software in order to use the CD-ROMs. The *Project Hermes Bulletin Board* was made available to all depositories. The Department of Energy's *Integrated Technical Information System* test ran for 17 depositories.

GPO published *GPO/2001: Vision for a New Millenium*, in which GPO is portrayed as an agency that will use advanced technologies to interact with its various constituencies. GPO published the first edition of *Recommended Minimum Technical Guidelines for Federal Depository Libraries*, which listed the computer hardware depositories were encouraged to provide. The Federal Depository Library Program Bulletin Board went online with shipping lists, *Administrative Notes*, and other information for depositories. GPO General Counsel, Anthony J. Zagami, issued an opinion that depositories were not permitted to charge library users for information they obtained as federal depositories, even if that information was electronic.

GPO published the results of its Technology Tea survey. It found that 80% of depositories said GPO should disseminate electronic data. GPO informed the Depository Library Council that it was having great difficulty convincing government agencies to disseminate electronic products through the depository system.

**1992:** Depositories were given a choice of selecting paper or CD-ROM of the *U.S. Code*, but could not choose both. This was the first time depositories were forced to choose between these formats.

**1993:** The Government Printing Office Electronic Information Access Enhancement Act of 1993 became law (frequently called GPO Access legislation). It directed GPO to: 1) Maintain an electronic directory of federal electronic information, the GPO Locator Service, a component of the Government Information Locator Service (GILS); 2) Operate an online archival storage facility for federal electronic information and make the information accessible. The Information Depository for Electronic Access (IDEA), was established in Owensboro, KY; 3) Provide electronic access to the *Congressional Record* and the *Federal Register*. GPO released these databases through the Federal Bulletin Board and a Wide Area Information Service (WAIS). GPO was allowed to charge "reasonable fees" for the use of these databases. These were the first two *GPO Access* databases. In return for free access to the WAIS, depositories were required to provide free access to the public.

The Office of Management and Budget revised OMB Circular A-130, *Federal Information Resources Management*, which said that federal agencies must provide electronic products to GPO for the depository library program.

There were 292 CD-ROMs distributed to depository libraries.

**1994:** The University of Missouri at Columbia was the first depository to provide public access to the WAIS, but others soon followed.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced that the *Monthly and Seasonal Weather Outlook* would no longer be published in paper, but would be available only on their Internet site.

GPO published *Electronic Capabilities of Federal Depository Libraries*. It revealed that while 78% of depositories had Internet access, only 37% provided Internet access to users.

**1995:** Congress directed GPO to write a plan that outlined the transition to an electronic depository system. GPO's plan, *The Electronic Federal Depository Program: Transition Plan, FY 1996 - FY 1998*, listed only 24 titles that would still be distributed in paper and assumed all other publications would be electronic by the end of FY1998.

GPO created the Electronic Transition Staff (ETS). ETS, in consultation with the Depository Library Council, wrote *Electronic Information Access and Dissemination in the Federal Depository Library Program*, which said that some information would be made available only in electronic formats. GPO released the *Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program*.

The Superintendent of Documents web site was developed. Among other things, it provided access to *GPO Access* and a searchable *Monthly Catalog of United States Publications*. GPO announced that access to *GPO Access* would be free to everyone.

The U.S. Census Bureau announced that a number of its series would be posted to its web site, not released in other formats. It also announced that electronic formats would gradually become the primary access mode for Census Bureau statistics.

The Biennial Survey of Depository Libraries showed that 50% of depositories could provide graphical user interface Internet access to their "primary institutional clientele," but only 37% could provide it to the public.

**1996:** GPO issued *Recommended Minimum Specifications for Public Access Work Stations in Federal Depository Libraries*. The FDLP Administration page was placed on the Web, with copies of *Administrative Notes*, manuals, and other materials for depositories. GPO required that all depositories provide public Internet access.

The first Internet-only depository document was released on *GPO Access*, *Preparing for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: An Appraisal of U.S. Intelligence*. There

were 2.4 million downloads per month from *GPO Access*.

**1998:** GPO released *Managing the FDLP Electronic Collection: Policy and Planning*, a collection development plan. It issued *Depository Public Service Guidelines for Government Information in Electronic Formats*.

**1999:** The U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science published *Report on the Assessment of Electronic Government Information Products*, commissioned by the GPO. It concluded that "responsibility for electronic publishing within agencies is decentralized, diffuse and unclear." GPO published, *FDLP Guidelines on Substituting Electronic for Tangible Versions of Depository Publications*. The guidelines allowed depositories to replace paper documents with a commercial, electronic product if it was "complete, official, and permanently accessible."

GPO published a set of Internet use policy guidelines for depository libraries.

**2000:** Superintendent of Documents Francis J. Buckley, Jr. sent directors of depository libraries a letter informing them that, due to an insufficient appropriation, most depository documents would be "furnished to Federal depository libraries solely in online electronic format."

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## Ohio GODORT Listserv

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Remember that the address for the Ohio GODORT listserv changed last June after our Webmaster Mark Gooch left Cleveland State to take a position at Kenyon College. If you haven't yet subscribed at the new address, here's how.

Send a message to:

**oh-godort-request@kenyon.edu**

In the body of the message, type:

**subscribe**

You will receive a confirmation message.

To post a message to the list, send them to:

**oh-godort@kenyon.edu**

If you have any questions, contact Mark Gooch at: [goochm@kenyon.edu](mailto:goochm@kenyon.edu)