GODORT State and Local Documents Task Force Meeting
2002 ALA Midwinter Conference, New Orleans LA
Saturday, January 19, 2002, 2-4:30 PM
Morial Convention Center, Room 282

 Chair Nan Myers called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. Present: Margaret Lane, Smittie Bolner, Stephen Woods, Linda Reynolds (Assistant Chair/Chair-Elect), Stephen Patrick, Bill Sleeman, Patricia Finney, Yvonne Wilson, Nancy Kohlenbrander, Brian Carpenter, Jody Fagan, Richard Gause. Becky

l 50 sites and evaluated them according to clarity of presentation and
, and document accessibility in multiples formats. She also distributed a
 pages with clear and usable interfaces.

Overall the focus of the study was usability. The authors found that sites with the clearest and simplest language outperformed fancy websites with complicated interfaces, java scripts, etc. Many sites seemed to have used the same commercial software for webpage design, but the better examples did not seem more expensive to implement.   The default browse used was Netscape, but some of the sites worked well only with advanced versions of Internet Explorer.

Each of the sites offered information about bills and statutes, but others included additional information, some more and some less. There were several questions from the task force about site content. While the study focused on site design, Jody noted that content varied wildly. The majority of them did not include Senate or Assembly journals or hearings. Some sites split Senate and Assembly information onto separate pages, and there were examples of information even more widely disbursed, including state constitutions split up onto 100 different pages, and 1500 page pdf files.

Jody suggested some possibilities for future study include the amount of funding available in each state for webpage design, more detailed surveys of content and archival policies, or explorations of local government websites.

Nan thanked Jody for an excellent presentation and moved on with the agenda.

2. Approval of the agenda: The agenda was approved. Nan noted that some committee liaison reports would be shifted to accommodate people with conflicting schedules.

3. Approval of SLDTF minutes from ALA Annual in San Francisco: the minutes were approved.

4. Reports from Committee Liaisons.

   a. Ad Hoc Committee on Digitization of Government Information (Cathy Hartman). Cathy reported on the committee's draft report, which was charged by incoming GODORT chair Ann Miller at the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago, 2000. The report is a substantial, well-documented work. The report's recommendations include increasing the membership of the Government Information Technology Committee (GITCO) by five members, updating the report's bibliographies, constructing a database of completed digitization projects, and creating lists of mentors to assist government information librarians with digital projects. The report also includes descriptions of best practices and digitization standards, a

clearinghouse of completed digital projects, and more. There is ongoing discussion about the possibility of a pre-conference on digitizing government information at ALA in Toronto, 2003. The target date for submission of the final report to GODORT Steering is May 2002.

b. Committee of Eight (Margaret Lane). Margaret contacted the committee last spring and asked them to respond to a survey concerning the SLDTF toolbox, otherwise there has been no activity. Laurie Kram from UCLA has left, and Louise Treff-Gangler volunteered to replace her. Margaret explained the committee's function is for each member to monitor government information issues for seven state governments. Essentially it is an activist tool/telegraph tree to contact state governments quickly.

c. Cataloging (Becky Culbertson). John Stevenson, chair of the committee, wishes to thank people from SLDTF who contributed to the Cataloging toolbox. Becky also noted GPO is getting a new Integrated Library System and is looking for suggestions to help meet the needs of the documents community.

d. SLDTF Web Coordinator (Atifa Rawan). In Atifa's absence, Nan asked if there were any webpage issues. It was noted from the floor that some links were broken. Nan suggested e-mailing Atifa if you come across something.

e. Education (Steven Woods). The committee is worki

Old Business

 5. GODORT Program for 2002 ALA Annual Conference, "Innovations in State Government Information Sources. Nan introduced the program to the task force, and noted that two speakers had agreed to make presentations: Trisha Cruse, Project Manager for the statistical database "Counting California" from California Digital Library (http://countingcalifornia.cdlib.org) and Susan Tuggle, Coordinator of Government Publications at UGA, and participant in designing the Georgia Government Documents section of Galileo (

Janet Justis (Legislation) arrived late from the ALA Government Information Subcommittee for the ALA Committee on Legislation (GIS) and noted an issue of concern is the draft 2003 Governor's Budget for the State of Washington, which effectively eliminates funding for the State Library. The budget has not gone forward to the State Legislature yet, but is still a serious issue as funding may be cut. The Washington Library Association is lobbying the state legislature.

Louise Treff-Gangler (nominating) noted GODORT nominations for IDTF Coordinator, SLDTF Coordinator, Fed Docs Coordinator, Chair of Publications, and Chair of GODORT are still being sought. Please contact her if interested or if you know anyone who might be.

Nan asked for a motion to adjourn and the meeting ended at 4:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Church