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The ECR RUMOR MILL

FIRST EDITION OF NEWSLETTER – HOT OFF THE PRESSES!

Welcome to the first edition of THE RUMOR MILL!

This newsletter was developed as a result of your responses in the Electronic Court Records (ECR) Focus Groups. Many of you told us that a good way to keep you informed of what's going on in ECR was to write it up in a newsletter.

This newsletter will be published periodically – anytime there's information to share with you we'll work to publish a new edition. Watch the edition numbers at the top to make sure you haven't missed reading one.

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This first edition features many things:

1. In answer to your Focus Group question, "What is Roger Winters role in ECR?" A story about Roger Winters.

2. The Summary of Findings from the ECR Focus Groups.

3. A re-run of the DJA newsletter article about the Scanning Project – just in case you missed it.

4. Getting to know the Scanning Project Staff

5. An update of ECR Communications Group activities

Hope you enjoy this and find it helpful!

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Roger Winters: This is Your Life

By Paul Wood

Most people in this office have at least seen Roger Winters, the manager of the ECR project, and some of us even know him. He is busy attending meetings, writing budget proposals for the project, coordinating the project with DJA and superior court staff, coordinating with the various agencies that will be affected by its implementation, and performing many other duties related to ECR.

The ECR communications team decided to conduct an interview with Roger for those of you who don't know who he is. The following is Part I, the result of the interview that I had with Roger on February 10, 1998:

Roger was born in Indiana and attended public schools there. He earned a BA in political science (poly-sci) from Indiana University and a master's degree in the same subject from Harvard University where he

DJA Is In Focus

Results of the DJA ECR Focus Groups
By Susan JC Klontz

The ECR Communications Group conducted 9 focus groups for DJA staff to identify the major problems staff experience related to court files and to hear staff concerns about ECR. We found that the groups shared many of the same issues in both areas.

The most frequently experienced problems were identified as:

* Missing and unavailable documents and court files: in use by others; misfiled; not checked out properly or kept too long by requesters; not pinned in files.

* Insufficient space for files: files on shelves packed too tight; files located in too many different places and methods; long retrieval time for files stored off site.

* Accuracy and legibility of document captions, case numbers and signatures.

SCANNING FOR STARS

Introduction to Scanning Staff

By Shirely Ritenour and Sheila Martin

Who are the scanning project staff? Here are some quick interviews with just some of the new kids on the block. See pictures featured on the last page. (And stay tuned for more spotlights to follow.)

Pam Anzai: Just spray on the "PAM" and nothing sticks.

The scanners are real sensitive to the type of paper that is scanned. The papers almost have to be perfect. The 8 x 14 long paper has to be reduced to 8 x 10 for the large scanner in room 2. The back side of documents have to be copied. The light printed documents have to be darkened. The scanner will not take thin paper. It's a lot of work. Scan, scan as fast as you can , 13 million copies takes a whole lotta ram.

Stephen Smith: Rah, Rah, Steve's our man, if no boss can be found, he can!

There are two small scanners that scan about 10,000 pages each per day, and one large scanner that scans about 16,000 pages per day. The biggest scanner problem is software. On February 19, 1998, IMAGE X was at RJC to look at the software problem. There is the possibility of obtaining one more large scanner and one desktop scanner. Of all the boxes of archived files that are stacked at RJC, Steve can magically find whatever you are looking for.

Michael Guddal : Mike the safe sorter--not just good for one but good for all.

He creates the perfect file that looks like a book. It must run smooth and look nice. This includes cutting corners, taping, pulling staples so nothing catches and double checking. Oh by the way, his specialty is fanning. He scans six hours a day and preps the rest of his time.

Jason Burt: Little Jason Horner sat in the corner cutting, cutting and more cutting.

The corners never cease. Every document must have its corners cut to remove the staple or any mutilation before it is scanned. Jason's desk is noted for a pile of corners. He likes not having a supervisor breathing down his neck and no stress but sitting down all day sometimes makes his legs hurt

Candace Malstrom: Candace is a long time friend of Victor Greer, so many of us know her already. This is a cheerful person, easy going and fun to be around. She is fairly new with the scanning project and likes being in on the start of something "big." She also enjoys the stress free work and loves working with the people.

Marina Serena: Marina has been working at the RJc since September, 1977. She has been with the scanning project almost since the beginning. She says the job is "great" and "stress free." She lives in Kent and has a whopping commute of one and one half miles. Wouldn't that be terrific? She likes working with the people, says they are a great group of people, and they make the job easy. She says the building is wonderful – clean and modern.

The Scanning Scoop

Reprinted by Permission

By Barb Miner

Have you heard about the Scanning Project at the RJC? If not, here's the scoop.

Instead of sending archived files to NW Center for storage or for microfilming, the files archived in 1997 were sent to the RJC to become part of the Scanning Project. Teresa Bailey has been the supervisor of the scanning project since it's inception. While she's temporarily gone, Victor Greer is taking the lead for the project. David Baker handles all the technology-related aspects of the project.

Much like microfilming, when a file goes to the scanning project it must go through a process of "document preparation" before it can be scanned. In this phase, all documents are removed from the pins, and all staples are removed, all torn pages are taped up, all duplexed pages are made into single-sided pages, and all short pages are made to be 8 ½ by 11 inches. This is a very labor intensive process, as you can imagine. Then the file goes to scanning.

The scanning machines are much like a copy machine or fax machine, except that they are attached to a computer and every page that is fed into a scanner becomes an image on the computer. So, on the computer screen next to the scanner, you can see the pages come up as they are being scanned and stored as an image. We have three scanning machines here at the RJC and about 18 pro tem staff for the project.

Scanning Scoop, continued

Once the pages of a file are scanned, the images are indexed to that case number and then quality control checking is done. Next the images are sent over the wide area network to a computer in the Key Tower downtown for storage. Both downtown and RJC Access sections have one computer each set up for viewing scanned files and scanned documents. These computers are primarily for the public, but obviously staff can use them too. Eventually, the scanned images will be made into microfilm via a computer program and a special machine. Microfilm is currently the only acceptable long term storage method, according to State regulations.

The Scanning Project is the first phase of Electronic Court Records for DJA. By scanning archived files, we learn lots of things about what it may be like scanning live cases, without the added pressure of lots of court and customer requests for these files, and lots of new papers coming in day to day.

There are benefits in scanning to customers too. Whereas microfilm is a lot like hard-copy in that only one person can view it at a time and all microfilm has to be accessed downtown, imaged files can be accessed by many people all at the same time. Also, SEA imaged files can be viewed at the RJC and KNT files can be viewed in Seattle.

It's an exciting project but it has not been without its trials and tribulations. We've experienced lots of problems with the scanners and with the software we are using. Every new project seems to go this way – no matter how much you plan, things are just different when you actually dig in and do it. We're digging in and we're learning lots!

Rumors about ECR

By Barb Miner

Do you have questions about the Electronic Court Records Project? Are you wondering who to ask? Who knows what about ECR?

The ECR Communications Group is ready to take on your questions about ECR. Send us your questions via email or hardcopy to "DJA Rumor Mill." (Hardcopy questions can be sent to Barb Miner.) We will research the right answer to your question and write back to you. In fact, your question and the correct answer

will be emailed back to all DJA email users. Your questions and answers will also be attachments to this newsletter.

The ECR Comm Group plans to provide you with copies (bright colored!) of everything we publish – including newsletters, memos, etc. But we know you can't remember everything and you may even lose some things before you read them. In order for you to easily find and read all the publications, we will be maintaining 5 binders for ECR materials.

We'll be keeping 1 binder in the lunch rooms at the RJC and downtown; 1 binder at Juvenile; 1 binder in the Courtroom clerks area downtown and one in the Administration office downtown.

Anytime you're interested – please take a minute to update yourself.

Roger, continued from page 1

had 6 years of post-graduate study. After earning his master's degree, he taught poly-sci for 4 years at Central Washington State College (now Central Washington University) in Ellensburg. He caught on with King County after a 3 year stint working for various non-profit groups, including brief duty as acting director of the ACLU of Washington. Roger worked as a program analyst in the King County Work Training Program until November 1988, when he came to work with DJA as manager of the Records and Research Division.

Roger stated that DJA maintains records for "the largest court system in the Northwest." In 1991, he and Jan Michels discussed implementing an imaging system mainly because of lack of room to store files and the inherent inefficiencies with maintaining hard copy files. "The technology in 1991 was too expensive for an imaging system." It wasn't until 1994, after Jan Michels and Judge Ramerman attended a technology conference in Nashville with other court officials where imaging technology along with word-processed documents was demonstrated, that an electronic filings system for DJA seemed possible. Planning for the DJA ECR system began in late 1994/early 1995.

Part II of this article will be printed in the next edition.

In Focus, continued from page 1

* Lack of staff: quality of docketing and pinning lost to keep up with volume; insufficient staff to retrieve/deliver files, perform critical search.

The concerns about ECR which were most frequently raised by the groups were in these areas:

*Security of system and records: effects of system down time and hackers; need for frequent data back-up; access to and protection of sealed records.

*Sufficient, quality equipment and proper training: availability and location of pc's and printers; consistent training by knowledgeable trainers able to communicate in layman's terms; ability of the public to use ECR equipment in-office and off-site.

* Effect on jobs; will we increase/reduce amount and complexity of work; how will our jobs change; can we work from home?; will we lose our jobs?

* Changes to our work procedures and product; how will we add our file stamp, subnumbers, receipting/accounting information; how will we route, reject, certify documents?

* Quality of the images: Will the images be legible? Can documents get destroyed before scanning or lost afterward?

We thank you all for your thoughtful answers to our questions! Creating a new system will need input from all of us – expect to hear from us as we report on ECR developments.

DJA FOCUS GROUP

Matching NAMES with FACES

The following are pictures of some of the scanning project staff that were featured in the article **Scanning for Stars** on page 2.

Those of us who work at the RJC and interact regularly with the Scanning Staff wouldn't necessarily recognize these folks from the following pictures.......but they're still worth sharing with you, so you can match the names to the faces you see here at the RJC.

Michael Guddal →

← Steve Smith

Jason Burt →

Pam Anzai
←