

Memorial: Donna “DJ” Morrison (1949–2003)

¶1 Donna “DJ” (for DeJong) Morrison, electronic services librarian at the State of Oregon Law Library in Salem, Oregon, passed away on July 28, 2003, after a courageous seven-month battle with cancer. She worked until ten days before her death, determined not to give in to her illness.

¶2 DJ was born November 16, 1949, on a family farm in rural Utica, South Dakota. She was the eldest of two girls born to Kenneth and Helen DeJong. She attended a one-room schoolhouse until entering high school in Yankton, South Dakota. While growing up, she worked on the farm, raising sheep and operating farm equipment. DJ was active in 4-H where she won regional and national competitions for sewing and judging.

¶3 Her interest in education resulted in a B.S. degree in textile research from Colorado State University in Ft. Collins, Colorado, a paralegal certification from the Metropolitan State College in Denver, and an M.S. in library and information technology from the Denver Campus of Emporia State University. While she was pursuing her library science degree in Emporia’s distance education program, she was honored as the 1997 recipient of the Special Library Association’s Rebecca Jackson Scholarship. Upon graduation she was also elected to Beta Phi Mu, the library and information studies international honor society.

¶4 DJ worked as a waitress and bartender to finance her undergraduate degree and after graduation first held positions as a data entry manager, program analyst, and paralegal. Her employers included Diversified Computer Systems in Colorado, U.S. West, and the Colorado State Public Defenders Office. She found her true calling when she joined the staff of the Wyoming State Law Library in 1989 as its first systems librarian. She originated many of the technical advances in that library, including putting together its original home page which is still the foundation of the current page. Because of DJ’s efforts in pushing adoption of electronic services, the Wyoming State Law Library was often on the cutting edge. She left Wyoming to become the reference librarian at the Washoe County (Nevada) Law Library. During her tenure there, she helped move the library into its new facility. She joined the State of Oregon Law Library (then the Oregon Supreme Court Law Library) as electronic services librarian on Valentines Day in 2000. At the State of Oregon Law Library, she quickly became the public face of the library, as she moved throughout the Judicial Department, giving one-on-one training and responding to computer problems, introducing new technology, revamping the library Web page, and helping create the online catalog for the Hatfield Library Consortium.

¶5 DJ was active in AALL, the Special Library Association, and the Western Pacific Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries (WestPac). She was

a member of the State, Court and County Law Libraries and Computing Services special interest sections of AALL. She served on AALL's Access to Electronic Legal Information Committee (2000–02) and Cataloging and Intranet Access to Electronic Resources Special Committee (2002–03). She was instrumental in handling much of the local arrangements for the 1995 WestPac meeting in Jackson, Wyoming. While in Wyoming, she was also active in the Legal Assistants of Wyoming and held the position of second vice president.

¶6 DJ enjoyed books, dancing, music, fly-fishing, camping, and, most of all, people. Her friendships were the source of her greatest joy. Those of us in Wyoming remember the day she announced her engagement. Joe Morrison proposed by having a cake specially decorated and presenting it to her at a party. She actually saved the cake and brought it in to the library to show it to us, and we all shared her joy as we shared the cake. That joy was even more evident on September 1, 1997, when DJ and Joe were married.

¶7 DJ is survived by her beloved husband Joe, her father and stepmother, her sister, and two nieces and a nephew.

¶8 She was a valued employee and coworker, and those who knew her will miss her deeply.—*Kathy Carlson*¹ and *Joe K. Stephens*²

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