Connecticar, the statewide delivery service, began in January, 1975 as a result of a recommendation from the Target '76 committee. It was originally established to support Connecticard service. In its 10 years of service, Connecticar has suffered reductions in service as a result of budget constraints and has enjoyed periods of growth during times of prosperity. A brief overview of this State Library service follows:

**WHERE WE WERE...**

In 1975, the state was divided into 5 delivery areas each containing 40 public libraries. Direct delivery was also provided to five teletype academic libraries and to a few selected additional academic libraries. About 40 libraries were to be visited daily (5 days per week) with the balance receiving less frequent service, but not less than once per week.

Materials that were delivered by Connecticar included library books, records, films, interlibrary loans, bulk loans and administrative messages.

In the first six months of the program, over 200,000 items were transported on Connecticar. By 1977, the volume of materials carried by the vans was so great, a seventh route was added to decrease the volume of materials handled on the existing routes.

Unfortunately, by 1978, the State Library found itself in a situation where severe budget constraints made it impossible to increase Connecticar service beyond seven routes despite heavy demands for service. Priorities for service were established which reconfirmed that public libraries receive primary consideration for service along with law libraries, institutional libraries, health service libraries and college and university libraries.

In 1977-80, Connecticar service suffered a setback that resulted from the oil crisis of 1978/79 and the imposition of gas rationing to state agencies. The State's Office of Policy and Management mandated a series of budget reductions which resulted in cutbacks to Connecticar service. Despite increases in volume (1.3 million items were transported in 1978-79) service had to be reduced. In 1980, Connecticar service was eliminated to all non-principal public libraries, only principal public libraries, teletype libraries plus heavy ILL volume libraries and State Library service points were to continue to receive service. The seventh route was eliminated and service to many libraries was reduced to once or twice per week service. It appeared that this program was in jeopardy.

**WHERE ARE WE NOW?**

In 1983, State Librarian, Clarence Walters established a State Library staff committee to review the Connecticar program and make recommendations for improved service to the library community.
The budget situation had greatly improved from the crisis of 1980 and the program had recently been placed under the direction of Gary Gallucci, Director of Plant Maintenance. The committee (Pat Owens, Leslie Burger, Gary Gallucci and Don LaMore) met for several months and developed a list of recommendations to be phased in over a period of time through a combination of redesigning existing routes and securing additional funds.

The Committee's recommendations included a goal to serve each Connecticar library at least twice a week, to add 77 new stops to existing Connecticar routes and to increase the number of miles traveled by Connecticar vans by 700 additional miles per week. The committee was particularly concerned with providing additional service to those libraries participating in automated circulation systems and to those libraries which have heavy interlibrary loan traffic.

The following changes in Connecticar service have been made as of March, 1986:

- Twice a week service has been restored to the public libraries located in Griswold, Lebanon, Montville, Preston, Salem, and Sprague

- Direct service has been extended to Mattatuck, Norwalk and South Central Community Colleges. Middlesex Community College library receives courier service.

- Daily service has been initiated to the following libraries due to heavy ILL lending and high Connecticar traffic: Avon, Bloomfield, Cheshire, Fairfield, Glastonbury, Greenwich, Manchester, Newington, Norwich, Putnam, Stamford, Trumbull, University of Hartford, UCONN-Storrs, Vernon, Waterbury, West Haven, Westport, Wethersfield

- Direct Connecticar service has been initiated for the Correctional institutions at Enfield, Somers, Hartford and Bridgeport; to Mental Health institutions at Newtown, Norwich and Bridgeport; to the Newington Children's Hospital, Waterbury Regional Center and the law libraries.

- A night sorting operation has been initiated to handle the increasing amount of materials handled by Connecticar. Sorters unload, sort and load the driver's vans for the next day's delivery. Relieving the drivers of this responsibility allowed for the expansion of service by increasing frequency of visits to 41 libraries and adding 15 others which were not previously served directly.

**Connecticar Facts**

- Connecticar makes 590 stops each week and serves 232 individual libraries.
• There are 7 routes operating; 3 routes operate on a 4 day work week and are on the road 8 3/4 hours per day.

• Seven drivers, 2 sorters and 2 supervisors comprise the Connecticar staff.

• Eight vans are leased from the Department of Administration Services and an annual cost of $29,376.

• Gasoline expenses amount to approximately $14,460 per year (based on $1.02/gallon).

• Personnel costs for the year ending June 30, 1985 amounted to $156,707.

• From July 1, 1984 to June 30, 1985, Connecticar vans traveled 237,422 miles and handled approximately 250,000 items.