

**NEXT
MEETING**

- **AALL President
James Duggan;
February 11,
2009**

**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:**

**SLA/Member 2
News**

**Treasurer's 3
Report**

**Grants 4
Available**

**Member 5
Spotlight:
Natalie Lira**

**Community 6
Service
Update**

**International 8
Association
of Law
Librarians
Report**

**HALL 11
January
Minutes**

From the President...

Happy 2009!

I look forward to seeing all of you at our meetings this year. Mark them on your calendar and plan to attend.

Our December holiday celebration at the Four Seasons Hotel was so enjoyable. I'd like to thank Ann, Natalie and Chris for arranging such a wonderful luncheon for us.

January brought us back to South Texas College of Law (special thanks to Heather Waltman and her colleagues at STCL) and we were able to once again visit



HALL President Elise McCutchen

with Curtis McMinn from the Houston Food Bank. Our theme of "Peanut Butter and Pantyhose" was very successful, as we collected boxes of both items and contributed cash to the Houston Food Bank and Dress for Success. I'm so proud of our generosity and community spirit! I hope it continues throughout the year.

We're looking ahead to February and a visit from James Duggan, AALL President. Please join us for dinner with James on February 10th. Details will follow by email. The Spring Workshop is in the planning stages and you'll be hearing more soon. It looks like a busy start to a great new year!

Cheers,
Elise

Continuing Education...

We are looking forward to having James Duggan, president of AALL, speak at our February 11 meeting. He will discuss how we can use the benefits of membership in AALL to better recession-proof our careers during these tumultuous times.

Our Spring workshop will be on Wednesday, March 11 from 9 - 4. Our topic is The Internet - a legitimate legal research tool. We will discover ways to conduct authoritative legal and factual research using the Internet. We will learn tips on how to determine if a website is authoritative and how to do efficient and effective Internet



*HALL Vice-President-
President-Elect Ann Patterson*

research. HALL is very fortunate to have an esteemed panel of educators who will speak on various topics such as locating foreign and US tax laws and treaties, how to conduct research on federal and Texas legislative history, how to do foreign legal research, and how to utilize features of wikis and blogs to enhance research as they help keep you current with today's legal issues. If you have any requests concerning Internet searching let me know and I will pass them on to our panel of experts. I look forward to seeing all of our HALL members and guests attend this very topical workshop.

-Ann Patterson

SLA News

Be sure and register early for the SLA Annual Meeting! If you register before January 31st with this special code (Stimulus Plan Discount Code SLA1909) you get \$45 off the Early Bird Rate.

Classics Book Club at Houston Public Library

Are you interested in reading Classic Literature? Join the Book Club at the Houston Public Library! We meet on the first Tuesday of the month at noon. The book for February is *Emma*, by Jane Austen, and we are taking on Thomas Hardy in March. Contact Sarah Borders at HPL for more information: 832.393.1522 or sarah.borders@cityofhouston.net.

Member News

Natalie Lira, Sr. Research Specialist at King & Spalding, is HALL's new Secretary! She is a wonderful addition to the Hall Board.

Michele Lucero, librarian relations manager, West, a Thomson Reuters Company, Los Angeles, received her MBA in strategic management from UNT in spring 2008. She began her Doctor of Education in organizational leadership with Pepperdine University in fall 2008.

*A good book is the best of friends.
- English Proverb*

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HALL Treasurer's Report

HALL Treasurer's Report (unaudited) October 9, 2008-January 14, 2009

Balance forward 10/09/08			\$ 18,181.75
	Income	Expenses	
Dues			
2008-2009	\$ 300.00		
Newsletter			
Luncheons/Receptions/ Seminars			
September 2008 Meeting	\$ 156.00		
October 2008 Meeting	\$ 325.00	\$ 368.00	
November 2008 Half-Day Semi- nar	\$ 1,225.00	\$ 1,270.05	
HALL-iday Luncheon	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 2,279.97	
Scholarships/Grants			
Administrative			
Chapter Liability Insurance		\$ 121.00	
Total	\$ 3,206.00	\$ 4,039.02	
Balance 01/14/09			\$ 17,348.68

Mariann Sears, Treasurer
January 14, 2009

The Executive Librarian
(Legal and Tax Library Filing and Maintenance Service)



Monika Miura
3510 Kiamesha Drive
Missouri City, Texas
77459-4413

Office: 281.437.2135 Cell: 713.859.5100 mmiura1@comcast.net

AALL Annual Meeting/Workshop Grants for New & Experienced Members Available

Thinking about attending the 2009 annual meeting, but need financial assistance? Apply now for an AALL grant to attend the AALL Annual Meeting or a workshop in Washington, D.C.! Grants are awarded to cover registration fees for the Annual Meeting or workshops presented at the Annual Meeting.

For the first time, two categories of grants are available: one for experienced members (5 or more years) who have a proven record of professional accomplishment and service to AALL and the other for Students/New Members (less than 5 years of professional experience) who hold promise of future involvement in AALL and the law library profession. Previously, newer members and students were given a scoring advantage, but the committee feels that experienced members are also in need of assistance to attend AALL Annual Meetings or workshops.

The application deadline is Wednesday, April 1, 2009. Don't delay!

For more information, see the Grants Committee website:

http://www.aallnet.org/committee/grants/grant_application.asp

Still have questions? Feel free to contact any member of the Grants Committee. Looking forward to receiving your application.

AALL Grants Committee

Houston Book Arts Group

The Houston Book Arts group meets on the first Thursday of every month at the Museum of Printing History. At each meeting, a workshop or demonstration is offered. The schedule of events for the next eight months is currently posted on the HBA site. Topics include Making Bookcloth, Calligraphy, the Edible Books Festival, and many others. The HBA website is actually a wiki where members of the group can share ideas, post photos, and ask questions. Links to related sites are also featured.

<http://www.houstonbookarts.org/>



Heather Waltman

HALL Member Spotlight:

Natalie Lira



OK, first things first. Natalie Lira loves legal research. And she loves her job.

This perfect match between job and employee began many years ago when Natalie, a native Houstonian, used to assist her Mom who worked at the Harris County District Attorney's office. Natalie helped out with basic office work, but there was something about the law that called to her.

After finishing high school at Milby, then college at the University of Texas at Austin, Natalie went on to the South Texas College of Law for her law degree. Natalie's favorite class? Legal Research and Writing of course, a class which usually elicited groans and moans from students. Natalie was on the Law Review, and again research, writing, and even cite-checking held a magic appeal.

Natalie clerked at ChevronTexaco during law school, and upon graduation and passing the bar, practiced at a small litigation firm. After a while, she realized that her place was not in the courtroom, but behind the scenes with her beloved legal research. A recruiter, let her know about a job opening in the Library at King & Spalding. Legal research? All the time? Natalie eagerly went for it.

Brian Bevins, the Library Manager at King & Spalding at the time, hired her on. Greg Lambert, her current supervisor, arrived a couple of months later. Natalie works on a wide range of research issues in the busy Library, but has formed a niche for herself with International Arbitration, and at times works at odd hours and weekends to accommodate schedules and time zones of King & Spalding attorneys world-wide.

Natalie is also a mom to two energetic boys, Jacob (age 5) and Julian (age 2). She and her husband Narciso, the City Engineer for the City of Pearland, have been married for 8 ½ years. Natalie and Narciso met as students at UT. They married when Natalie was 21 and now she laughs, "looking back, that seems really young!" but fortunately for her, Narciso remains her best friend.

Natalie's favorite hobby is photography, and it's maybe the only thing (besides her family) that she loves as much as legal research. She is interested in photographing people - both portrait and candid shots. She loves how a single photograph can capture the essence of an individual's personality. Above all, she enjoys photographing kids because they are so genuine with their expressions and in their actions - they provide the most interesting shots! Her other favorite subject? A true orange-blooded Longhorn, Natalie loves taking pictures of the Tower at the University of Texas and other monuments on the UT campus and around Austin.

Mary Ann Wacker

HALL Community Service Committee Report

Last month's meeting was a huge success! Thanks to your generosity, HALL raised approximately \$1,200 for the Houston Food Bank and \$800 for Dress for Success Houston! A portion of these totals (\$250 per organization) was contributed by HALL's matching funds, but the overwhelming majority of the proceeds was donated by our terrific members. I am astounded! I'm so proud to be part of such a charitable and caring group. Your response is truly heartwarming!

With your contributions, the Houston Food Bank and Dress for Success Houston will continue to provide assistance to those who need it most. As our delightful speaker, Curtis McMinn, Volunteer Services Coordinator for the Houston Food Bank, told us, the need for charitable services is especially great as increasing numbers of our fellow Houstonians are affected by the current economic downturn. Your willingness to share your prosperity with those less fortunate at a time when everyone is feeling the pinch is a real inspiration. When a thoughtful, caring group of people shows such generosity, it restores our faith in what is possible. I can't thank you all enough for your contributions of not only money but peanut butter and pantyhose as well. These are both high demand items at the HFB and DFS; both organizations and the people they help will be happy to have them!

I am so encouraged by all of your kindness, and I hope that HALL will continue to support worthwhile organizations like the Houston Food Bank and Dress for Success. Within HALL, I would love to see a greater emphasis on community involvement and charitable giving, and these two organizations would, I think, make great community service partners.

Thank you again for your overwhelming support and for making this Community Service Committee event a tremendous success! You all are fantastic!

Heather Waltman



Pssst! One of the top careers for 2009 according to the U.S. News and World Report is ...Librarian!

Best Careers 2009—Librarian:

<http://www.usnews.com/articles/business/best-careers/2008/12/11/best-careers-2009-librarian.html>

Forget about that image of librarians as a mousy bookworms. More and more of today's librarians must be clever interrogators, helping the patron to reframe their question more usefully. Librarians then become high-tech information sleuths, helping patrons plumb the oceans of information available in books and digital records, often starting with a clever Google search but frequently going well beyond.



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International Association of Law Libraries

Puerto Rico & the Caribbean: Legal Information in Multiple Legal Systems

International Association of Law Libraries (IALL) held their 27th annual conference in San Juan, in December, 2008. Over 140 conference attendees stayed at the Caribe Hilton where they were thoroughly immersed in the varying legal systems of the Caribbean countries and the political and economic issues of the region.

Topics included the Death Penalty – Developments in Caribbean Jurisprudence, Exploring Mixed Jurisdictions, and Modernization of the Cuban Legal System: Socialist Law in the 21st Century. The emergence of CARICOM and the development of the Caribbean Court of Justice were also addressed.

The first session, From Plantation to Resort, with Professor Emilio Pantojas Garcia, was a great introduction to the new economic order of the region as countries shift from one of agricultural exportation to one of manufacturing and tourism. He discussed the 18th Century colonization and plantation system as the export of “after dinner crops” (sugar, tobacco, coffees, and bananas) to the European countries. However, in the 20th Century, the mix of emerging independent countries attempted to create a regional integration with those still in the grips of colonial powers to create economic blocs. Such attempts were the West Indian Federation of 1958, CARIFTA in 1968 and CARICOM in 1973.

CARICOM is still maturing and we learned about their efforts from Cheryl Thompson-Barrow, General Counsel to the CARICOM Secretariat. Created by the Treaty of Chaguaramas in 1973, and revised in 2001, their objectives are to improve the standards of living, the expansion of trade, economic development and to act as a bloc in negotiating with 3d states. To provide this cohesiveness they are looking at harmonizing laws of individual nations, providing model bills that can be used as a template. This is certainly a challenge as you have municipal laws that are based on the common law of England, and the mixed (civil & common) jurisdictions like those of Haiti and Suriname, thrown in with vestiges of the Dutch and French legal systems.

The challenges of researching these jurisdictions were addressed by three very talented librarians; Yemisi Dina (York University) addressed the English based legal systems, Francoise Beaulieu Thybulle (National Library of Haiti) addressed the French based legal systems and Marisol Floren (Florida International College of Law) addressed the Spanish based legal systems. Their sources are listed on GlobaLex (through NYU) <http://www.nyulawglobal.com/globalex/index.html?open=ILR#>

To say that everything is not available is putting it mildly! So each indicated accessing alternative sources like law firm websites as well as those built by Academic and Bar Associations was imperative.

While we spent much of the time in meetings, some wonderful side trips were included including one to Ponce and the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico. Father Pedro L. Reyes Lebron presented “Canon Law in the Life of the Church: Investigations and perspectives in keeping with the recent Papal Magisterium,” discussing the need for Canon Law in the Church and a real understanding of Justice. After the presentation we were provided a wonderful tour of the City of Ponce and fabulous dinner overlooking the city.

San Juan is a fascinating destination and the people are marvelous, the history, the climate, the architecture are colorful and fascinating. Only a short 3 hour non-stop flight from Houston, it’s definitely worth the trip!

-Monica Ortale



Monica's view from Hilton View West (wow!)



View of Ponce from the villa to the Caribbean Sea



Christmas Decorations at the Villa

The HALL Newsletter, published 6 times a year by the HALL Publications Committee, is the official publication of the Houston Area Law Librarians. The purpose is to communicate information to its members. Send contributions, comments, news items, or advertising queries to Mary Ann Wacker, Editor, maryann.wacker@bgllp.com.

All contributions submitted for publication are subject to editorial review. HALL does not assume responsibility for the statements of contributors. Views or opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of Houston Area Law Librarians. The HALL Newsletter is not copyrighted, however, permission should be sought from the authors and credit given when quoting or photocopying material from this publication.

Membership dues for HALL are \$25/year. For membership information, please contact Laurie Gaas at lgaas@stcl.edu or 713-646-1714.

Membership form is available here: <http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/hall/dues.pdf>

AALL February Webinar

C-ing is Believing—Next Steps for Library Success

Communication plays an important role in our daily lives. It is key to our success with C-level management (CEOs, CFOs, CIOs, etc.). Log in to C-ing is Believing: Next Steps for Library Success on Tuesday, February 17, from 12-1 p.m. (EST), and learn how a librarian should interact with the C-people to earn their respect and provide a clear understanding of the value the law library brings to their organization. Register online by February 12.

More information here:

<http://www.aallnet.org/calendar/eventdisplay.asp?eid=269&arc=no>

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HALL January Meeting Minutes

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL
HALL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
January 14, 2009
South Texas College of Law Library

Elise McCutchen called the meeting to order at 12:05 P.M. No new members were present.

The October minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Mariann Sears passed out the treasury report and reported that there is money in our bank account. She asked if there were any questions. There were none. She indicated that we want to be sure to offer good scholarships and grants because we have a healthy budget.

OLD BUSINESS: No old business.

NEW BUSINESS: Gwendolyn Johnson had her baby and resigned as HALL Secretary. Natalie Lira agreed to serve as Secretary.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Archives: No report. It was suggested that if any past officers have records, please bring them to the next HALL meeting.

Bylaws: No report.

Continuing Education: Ann Patterson announced that James E. Duggan, AALL President, will be coming to the HALL meeting in February. He will talk about how we can recession-proof the librarian position. She indicated that she will be taking suggestions on what to do regarding the Spring workshop and would like to send an email surveying the current needs.

Library School Liaison: No report.

Membership: No report

Nominations: No report.

Placement: No report.

Publications: Mary Ann Wacker announced that she would be working on the newsletter and asked that submissions be sent by Friday, January 23.

Scholarships and Grants: No report.

Vendor Relations: A Vendor relations forum is coming up this month and an email should be sent by the week of January 19. One of the vendors will be a cost recovery company.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:10 P.M.

-Natalie Lira

Houston Area Law Librarians

P.O. Box 61648
Houston TX 77208

- Ideas
- Sharing
- Education
- Cooperation
- Resources
- Networking

Houston Area Law Librarians is a chapter of the American Association of Law Librarians.

Our monthly meetings are held at the South Texas College of Law. We present a half-day seminar in the Fall and a full-day seminar in the Spring on legal topics.

There are close to 200 members of HALL. We are librarians in firms, law schools, and courts as well as vendors.



HALL Officers and Committees

President: Elise McCutchen
elise.mccutchen@tklaw.com

Vice-President/President-Elect:

Ann Patterson
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Secretary: Natalie Lira
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Committees:

By-Laws:

Charles Gibson

Continuing Education:

Ann Patterson

Membership:

Laurie Gaas

Nominations:

Caralinn Cole

Placement:

Pam Jenkins

Publications:

Barbara Szalkowski

Scholarships/ Grants:

Judith Jackson

Archives:

Heather Kushnerick

Government Relations:

Tracy Timmons

Library School Liaison:

Blythe McCoy

Community Service:

Heather Waltman

Vendor Relations:

Colleen Pincumbe

Newsletter Editor:

Mary Ann Wacker