

AALL Board Member
Sally Wise with AALL
Update

Wednesday, April 4,
2010

South Texas College of
Law Library

11:45 a.m.

INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:

HALL Grants 2

HALL 3
February
Minutes

HALL 4
Member
Spotlight

AALL 5
Government
Relations

PLL Webinar 5

HALL Spring 6
Seminar
Recap

HALL 9
Treasurer's
Report

HALL Newsletter

VOLUME 27, NUMBER 2

MARCH/APRIL 2010

From the President...

It's spring and time to renew your AALL membership. Soon you will be asked to renew your HALL membership, as well. I know that the current economic situation may make you think twice about the cost of AALL membership, but I would like to remind everyone that there are benefits to membership: a connection with a national network of law library professionals; *AALL Spectrum* and *Law Library Journal*, where members can read about current trends and research topics; discounts on Annual Meeting registration and other educational programs; and access to special benefits in the AALLNET Members Only Section. Be sure to visit www.aall.org to see and utilize the programs that have been created just for you. If you are unemployed, you may be eligible for their heavily discounted membership program. Go to https://secure.aallnet.org/unemployed_form.asp to check eligibility.

Membership in HALL is a super bargain. And remember, we have membership scholarships for

Continuing Education...

My year as Vice President is coming to an end and I have learned so much and have had the opportunity to meet so many wonderful people. I hope you all have enjoyed the line-up of speakers this past year at our meetings and seminars. This year has certainly been a challenge but there were so many people that helped make this past year run smoothly. I sincerely want to thank everyone for all of the help and encouragement.

We have two meetings left before our summer break. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 14th and will feature AALL Board member, Sally Wise, Law Library Director and Professor of Law at the University of Miami. HALL will be providing lunch (catered by Chick-fil-A) for the members that would like to attend

those members in need. HALL has excellent benefits, too. The recent Spring Seminar is just one service that HALL provides to the library community. Another is having the ability to borrow from each other. This provides an excellent consortium of library assets for our members. And please use all of the features of our website, www.houstonarealawlibrarians.com. It is there for you.

Think about your AALL membership and don't forget to renew your HALL membership when you get your notice. Please make plans to attend our April meeting where one of AALL's Board members will speak on the benefits of membership and what AALL can do for you.

See you there!



HALL President
Ann Patterson

the meeting. Our annual business meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2010 where awards will be presented and elections of new officers will be conducted. Please plan on attending these last two meetings.



HALL
Vice-
President
Natalie
Lira

HALL Grants - No More April Fool's Day Deadline



Need financial assistance to travel to AALL's 103rd Annual Meeting & Conference in Denver?

The postmark deadline for travel grants to the Denver meeting this July and scholarships to library school/law school is April 2nd.

Applications are available at the HALL website and should be addressed to:

Judith Jackson, Harris County Law Library
1019 Congress, 17th Floor
Houston, Texas 77002

Get a Free Year of AALL Membership with Nonmember Annual Meeting Registration

New this year! AALL is offering nonmembers a complimentary one-year membership when they register for the AALL Annual Meeting and Conference, held July 10-13 in Denver. The membership includes:

- Career resources, such as the online AALL Career Center and continuing education to help you learn new skills to advance in your career
- Access to specialized information created just for law librarians, such as the *AALL Biennial Salary Survey* and the *AALL Price Index for Legal Publications*
- Subscriptions to the monthly magazine, *AALL Spectrum*, and quarterly journal, *Law Library Journal*, to help you keep up on the latest trends in law librarianship
- The opportunity to network and connect with other law librarians from across the country who share similar interests and are facing the same challenges
- Discounted rates on all AALL products and services, such as publications, webinars, and online job postings

Annual Meeting registration opens February 17. Be sure to take advantage of this special offer for nonmembers.

KEEP IT CURRENT

Library Update Service



JEANNE HARRIS

MSLS

(512) 632-9637

kic4jharris@hotmail.com

**3112 Windsor Rd • Suite A-363
Austin, TX 78703**

Have you ever considered a leadership position in HALL? If so, contact Caren Luckie, our Nominations Committee Chair!
cluckie@jw.com



HALL February Meeting Minutes

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL
HALL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
February 10, 2010
South Texas College of Law Library

Ann Patterson called the meeting to order at 12:10 P.M and welcomed new members

The January minutes were not available for approval.

Treasurer's Report: Mariann Sears provided copies of the Treasurer's Report and the report was approved.

OLD BUSINESS: No old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ann asked that nominations for the Volunteer of the Year award be made as soon as possible. She also mentioned that AALL is looking to have the 2017 annual meeting in Austin, TX.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Archives: No report

Bylaws: No report

Community Service: No report

Continuing Education: Natalie Lira announced that the Spring Seminar is scheduled for March 10th and the topic is research around the globe.

Government Relations: No report

Library School Liaison: No report

Membership: No report

Nominations: Caren indicated that the committee is currently working on nominations.

Placement: No report

Publications: No report

Scholarships and Grants: No report

Vendor Relations: Colleen indicated that she would be sending out information on the next vendor forum.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:10 P.M.

-Submitted by Natalie Lira

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

HALL Member Spotlight: Laura Edstrom

I have known Laura Edstrom for a while and have never seen her without a smile on her face. She is really one of the kindest and most cheerful people I know.

Laura grew up in Houston the sixth of seven children in a large Catholic family. They all lived in a three bedroom, one-and-a-half-bath house (think about that for a sec). There is a 13 year age gap between Jay, the oldest, and Beth, the youngest. Laura has three brothers and three sisters. Laura is still close to her family and vacations with them. They spend two weeks each summer together at a Galveston beach house.

While in high school, Laura worked at Astroworld—I don't know how many of you grew up in Houston, but I fondly remember many summer days there and can picture Laura in her bright garb. Laura worked at the chicken restaurant and pizza parlor—eventually she was promoted to supervisor and even got a walkie-talkie!

After high school, Laura attended the University of Houston. She worked as manager of the UH volleyball team. Because of her work for the team, Laura was granted a scholarship which included tuition, fees, and books, and studied accounting and business. On one of the team's out of town trips, Laura suffered a grand mal seizure one evening in a hotel room. She remembers waking up in the hospital, but suffered some short term memory loss and had to take incompletes for her courses for that semester. The seizure was never medically explained and Laura suffered another seizure 9 months later and was put on a strong anti-seizure medicine. As a result of the memory loss and having to deal with some side effects of the prescription medicine, Laura finally ended up dropping out of UH after completing 60 hours.

Laura went on to get a job at Fluor in the Accounting Dept. When Fluor moved its offices to Sugar Land, Laura went too. She, however, increased her commute by moving to the Woodlands. Laura changed jobs in 1986 when she joined the staff at the South Texas College of Law Library, where she has worked for the last 25 years! She started in the Serials Department, then worked for a time in Acquisitions, was Circulation Manager, and is now an Accounting Assistant. Her first brush with HALL came during these years when she rode in a vanpool downtown with our very own Colleen Pincumbe!

Laura Edstrom (right) with Mary Ann Wacker at Kim Son



Laura has a very strong Catholic faith. She currently serves as a lector and communion minister, and heads up the Adult Faith Formation and is a member on the Vocations Committee at her parish Corpus Christi (near Stella Link and 610). She also attends Mass each day at the Holy Cross Chapel on Main Street downtown. She helps organize a 5-week series for women during Lent at the Chapel Thursday mornings, and helps out at the Chapel all times of the year by making preparations for Mass, serving at Mass, and also helping organize a women's series for the Advent season as well.

Laura has a 25 year old daughter, Stefanie. She also is a huge Astros fan, a great gardener, and loves to watch "24", "Lost", "Chuck", and "Jeopardy". Believe it or not, she also plays a mean game of Texas Hold-em, and bridge.

Traveling is also one of Laura's hobbies. She went on a trip to the Holy Land last year. The highlights of that trip were walking the Way of the Cross and seeing the Church of the Holy Sepulchre after visiting the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane. She also went to the Dead Sea, Bethlehem, and Jordan. She joined the locals for a Turkish Bath in Petra! This May, Laura is going on a cruise around the Mediterranean—stops include Barcelona, Monte Carlo, Rome, Florence, and Naples. She is staying on after the cruise with some friends who rented a villa in Provence! That sounds wonderful!

-Mary Ann Wacker

AALL Government Relations News

The Government Relations Committee of AALL is hard at work on various initiatives. Our fearless leader, Mary Alice Baish, is amazing. On February 24th she testified at a Congressional Hearing and described the need for funding for Congressional Printing and Binding so Depository Libraries can have the option of receiving materials in print; funding for the FDsys system (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/search/home.action>) to move GPO Access to FDsys; encourage GPO and the Library of Congress to enter into a formal Memorandum of Understanding for the digitization of historic legal resources; and for GPO to capture content from federal agencies into FDsys.

Are you willing to meet with members of Congress to push AALL's initiatives? Be sure and attend the *Advocacy Training Course* in Denver at the AALL Annual Meeting!

The Government Relations office is also working towards gathering members who are interested in participating in a State Working Group. These Groups will respond to challenges that threaten the authentication and preservation of online legal resources, and contribute to the development of a national inventory of primary legal information—at the state level.

Here is a flyer with more information: www.aallnet.org/aallwash/stateworkinggroups.pdf

At this month's meeting (via conference call) we discussed the nominations for the Oakley (for advancing the AALL policy agenda) and PAGI (Public Access to Government Information) Awards. There were many worthy candidates and many were quite inspiring.

Mary Ann Wacker
AALL Government Relations Committee

HALL Spring Seminar Recap

Morning Sessions—Natalie Lira

Our Spring seminar was full of fantastic presentations and a wealth of information. I hope you all learned as much as I did! I want to thank all of our speakers and everyone who attended. I also would like to thank Bloomberg and Westlaw Business for sponsoring the seminar. I would also like to thank LexisNexis for generously donating three copies of the Guide to International Legal Research which were raffled off to three lucky winners at the seminar.

Rhonda Keaton of LexisNexis started off the seminar with a very informative presentation on firms and businesses going global. She discussed how the legal work is changing and the impact this has had on firms in general. She also discussed how firms are responding to the change by moving abroad, changing practice areas, and changing business practices. She provided a history of the international firm, discussed the impact the events of 2009 had on changing the dynamics of firms and their business, discussed trends for 2010, and also provided an overview of areas of law that are currently hot practices.

Rhonda's presentation was followed by a fantastic presentation by Chris Dykes of the University of Houston on researching international tax treaties. Chris began the presentation with a discussion of sources of international law such as the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, Model Tax Conventions, Tax Treaties, Customary international law, and general principles of law. He also discussed where such laws and conventions may be located. He provided insight on the difference between locating treaties where the United States is a party versus treaties in which the United States is not a party. Chris also discussed a number of secondary sources, practice guides, treatises, and journals/periodicals discussing tax treaties. Lastly, Chris provided a number of online databases that can be consulted for treaty research.

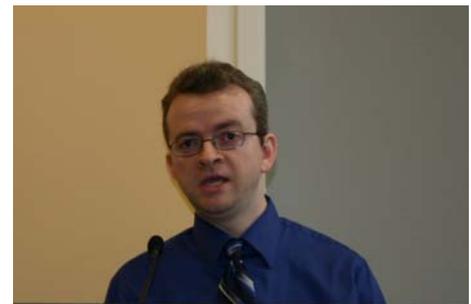
Chris' presentation was followed by an excellent presentation on Islamic Finance delivered by Catherine Whitney of Westlaw Business. Catherine provided everyone with a glossary of terms commonly used in Islamic Finance. She then provided an introduction of Islamic Finance and why it has suddenly become active in many international firms. An interesting aspect of Islamic Finance is the role of Islamic scholars and the training they undergo to become a scholar. Catherine provided a discussion of the main instruments used in Islamic Finance such as the Ijara (lease agreement), the Murabaha (cost-plus financing) and the Sukuk (bond). She also discussed other aspects of Islamic Finance such as the Istisna'a (commissioned manufacturing), the Bai'Salam (advance purchase), the Mudaraba (profit sharing), and the Musharaka (partnership).

Overall, the morning sessions were outstanding and very informative. Thanks again to all the speakers for sharing your knowledge of these topics with us!



*Catherine Whitney
discusses Islamic
Finance*

*Chris Dykes
speaks on
international
tax treaty
research*



*Brooke Fera and Mitch
Rothenberg from Bloomberg;
Bloomberg generously
underwrote the costs for the
seminar lunch.*

Afternoon Sessions—Mary Ann Wacker

“Unlocking the Mystery of the Chinese Legal System: Researching the Laws of China” was presented by Blythe McCoy of Thomson Reuters. Blythe gave us some basic facts about China's population, history, and legal system. Although China has opened up quite a bit, there are still tight restrictions on businesses and people. The Communist party is still in firm control of everything, and laws and regulations are issued in a very top-down direction. There is a National People's Congress, with 3,000 locally-elected members, which holds little power or influence. The most powerful arm of the Party is the State Council. The country's President is mainly a ceremonial role – the State Council and heads of various ministries hold most of the power.

There are various levels of courts, but court decisions in China are not used as precedent as ours are. One must obtain permission to obtain information on any case – they are not available to the public as a rule. Much more emphasis is placed on laws and regulations, which are extensive – there are close to 40,000 ever-changing laws and regulations in force from national, provincial, and local levels. There is no overarching system of organizing these laws and regulations, so conflict of laws is a problem.

The number of lawyers in China continues to rise. There are currently thousands of law students. Also the number of foreign law firms operating in China is also rising exponentially. Foreign firms are not allowed to advise Chinese clients; they must partner with local firms to do that. Foreign firms are limited to advising clients in international practice.

“Brazil: A Look at the Brazilian Legal System and Discussion of the New Oil and Gas Law” was presented by Paula Galahrdo and Aaron Ball of Looper Reed and McGraw. Paula, a native of Brazil, gave us an overview of the legal and judicial system in Brazil. Brazil has 26 states and a federal district in the capital, Brasilia. The federal legislature has two houses, the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. They create laws regarding civil, commercial, and criminal codes as well as maritime and labor laws. The states can make laws regarding most everything else, such as economy, education, environment, and tax. Some laws can vary widely among the states and some may conflict. Tax laws are notoriously difficult as they change frequently. Also, there are close to 5000 municipalities which can also make laws. Paula took us through the federal legislative processes and the back and forth of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. Newly-passed laws go into effect quickly when they are published in the *Official Diary*.

The court system has many levels as well. The highest court in Brazil is the Supreme Federal Court located in Brasilia. Brazil has a constitutional right of appeal. Case law in Brazil is not as highly regarded as in the United States but can be used to make a point. Some rulings, even of the highest court, are not followed by other courts. The wealthier states in the southern part of Brazil (where Sao Paulo and Rio are located) routinely ignore decisions of the poorer northern regions.

Aaron Ball then discussed the oil and gas industry in Brazil and the exciting new oil-rich area located off the Brazilian coast where there is thought to be billions of barrels of oil deep beneath the sea and ocean floor. The oil sits beneath a enormous salt deposit making it difficult to access—and even to know for certain just how much oil is there. If the estimates are correct, Brazil will be the 6th largest holder of reserves in the world.

Aaron explained the concept of the state-owned oil company. Companies like Pemex in Mexico and Saudi Aramco are examples. Petrobras, the Brazilian oil company, is partially state-owned. He then explained the various models used for oil and gas exploration:

- Concession Agreements: the oil company gets the title of all the oil or gas they can find; they pay a bonus to the country and fees to have access to the land area surrounding the oil to actually extract the oil or gas
- Production Sharing Agreements: Norway, the U.K., Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela usually use this type of arrangement; the title to the oil stays with the government; the company gets part of the oil; in this type of arrangement the oil is usually not that difficult to access
- Joint Venture Agreement: oil is usually a sure thing; government does not want to take much risk; government participates via tax incentives
- Service Model: not used that much; government keeps all rights while oil company is paid in cash; usually used with governments such as Iran or Mexico

Brazil is currently debating sweeping changes in its Legislature regarding oil and gas law. As part of these new laws Petrobras gets 30% of any oil and gas activity in this new area of exploration. Most large oil companies are waiting to see what happens in the Legislature before committing resources there.

Saskia Mehlhorn presented the final talk of the day: "Researching European Union Law". Saskia gave a brief overview of the history of the 27 European nations incrementally coming together after the end of World War II. The various treaties over the years ranged from trade to security policy to police and judicial cooperation. The most recent treaty, the Treaty of Lisbon, made sweeping changes to the EU in 2009.

One change was the creation of a Council President who will hold office for 2 ½ - 5 years. It was decided it was confusing for the rest of the world that the EU did not have one person who was the "face" of the EU.

The various parts of the EU Administration include:

- European Parliament, which is over 1000 members
- European Council – members from the larger Parliament group
- Council of EU Ministers – members of the participating states' ministries, usually the foreign minister
- European Commission – named by member states
- Court of Justice – interprets EU regulations and directives
- European Central Bank
- Court of Auditors – control of money

The EU's main issuances are regulations and directives. The regulations go into effect immediately; the directives are guidelines for all member states to implement in their own nations, usually with a deadline of 1-2 years. The regulations are usually introduced by the European Commission.

Saskia directed us to some helpful web sites for locating the regulations and directives:

- http://europa.eu/index_en.htm
- <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/index.htm>



Speakers Saskia Mehlhorn (l) and Rhonda Keaton (r) with HALL Vice-President Natalie Lira

Speakers Aaron Ball (l) and Paula Galahrdo (r); with HALL Vice-President Natalie Lira



Lucky book drawing winners (l-r): Heather Kushnerick, Paula Howe, and Adrienne Richey from the State Law Library; the book is Guide to International Legal Research

HALL Treasurer's Report (unaudited) March 22, 2010

Balance forward 02/10/10			\$16,925.81
	Income	Expenses	
Dues			
Newsletter			
Ads	\$ 60.00		
Luncheons/Receptions/ Seminars			
February-10	\$ 192.00	\$ 751.50	
March-10	\$ 820.00	\$ 172.81	
Scholarships/Grants			
Administrative			
Postage		\$ 10.90	
Total	\$ 1,072.00	\$ 935.21	
Balance 03/22/10			\$17,062.60

Mariann Sears, Treasurer
March 22, 2010

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.

www.houstonarealawlibrarians.com

HALL Officers and Committees

Officers:

President: Ann Patterson
eapatterson@fulbright.com

Vice-President/President-Elect:

Natalie Lira
nlira@kslaw.com

Secretary:

Riva Laughlin
Riva.laughlin@haynesboone.com

Treasurer: Mariann Sears
mariann.sears@tklaw.com

Members-at-Large:

Lydia Ramirez
Lydia.ramirez@chamberlainlaw.com

Patti Curtis
pcurtis@andrewskurth.com

Past President: Elise McCutchen
emccutchen@isdhouston.com

Committees:

By-Laws:

Charles Gibson

Continuing Education:

Natalie Lira

Membership:

Jeannie Mazzone

Nominations:

Caren Luckie

Placement:

Caralinn Cole

Publications:

Barbara Szalkowski

Scholarships/Grants:

Judith Jackson

Archives:

Heather Kushnerick

Government Relations:

Mary Ann Wacker

Library School Liaison:

Blythe McCoy

Community Service:

Heather Waltman

Vendor Relations:

Colleen Pincumbe

HALL Website:

Elise McCutchen and
Saskia Mehlhorn

Newsletter Editor:

Mary Ann Wacker