



LLAA News

Volume 1, Number 1

Spring 2008

President's Column

Greetings from Montgomery!

Here it is! Back from an extended hiatus, The *LLAA News* has reemerged. Thanks to our Newsletter chair, Tim Lewis, for revitalizing this method of LLAA Chapter communication. In an attempt to gather up all archival issues, if you have a personal copy of any previous issues of the chapter newsletter, please let me know. The chair would like to scan past issues to add to the chapter website.

Meeting Update: Incoming LLAA president, Myra Sabel, and the program committee, developed an interesting selection of programs for our Friday May 16, 2008 meeting in Birmingham. (See program agenda) In addition to two fine programs, Ms. Sarah "Sally" Holterhoff, immediate past president of AALL, has accepted our invitation to visit our chapter. Sally will speak about authentication and solicit your questions. Submit any questions you have about AALL to me gpanagotacos@faulkner.edu and I will forward them to Sally. Questions "from the floor" will also be entertained!

Outreach Activities: In April, Myra Sabel and I traveled to Tuscaloosa and spoke to Professor Sybil Bullock's Special Libraries class about career opportuni-

ties in law librarianship. In addition, LLAA hosted a table at the Alabama Library Association exhibit hall during their annual convention in Birmingham on Wednesday April 23 & Thursday April 24. Our goal was to promote our chapter to our non-law library colleagues. DeDe Bradsher and I staffed the table both days (See article and photo on page 3). This was a successful event and one which we should repeat next year when the Alabama Library Association meets in Opelika.

The LLAA Committee structure continues to develop. With the continuity of another Montgomery LLAA President, we hope to continue the revitalization of the LLAA committee structure with multi-year terms and chairs to oversee development of projects over the course of several administrations. After all, before you know it, we will need to plan for our 20th year anniversary!

Please plan to attend our spring meeting Friday May 16 for a day of camaraderie, refreshments, and professional growth. See you soon!

Gigi

"Dean" of Alabama Law Librarians Retires

Laurel R. "Becky" Clapp, Law Librarian and Professor of Law at Cumberland School of Law, will be retiring at the end of May 2008 after 33 faithful years at Cumberland. Becky is a graduate of David Lipscomb College in Nashville, Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law, and the University of Washington. After graduating from library school, she began her career at Texas Tech University, where she worked from 1970 to 1974. Upon leaving Lubbock in 1975, she moved to Birmingham and started work at Cumberland School of Law where she taught Legal Research and Writing for twelve years (directing the program for three years) as well as serving as director of Cordell Hull Law Library, later to become Lucille Stewart Beeson Law Library when the library entered a new facility. She was instrumental in planning and coordinating the construction of this new library which opened in 1995 with a library organization of six librarians and six library staff. Becky served as President of Law Libraries Association of Alabama in the 2004-2005 term. She was published in *Law Library Journal* in 1994 with an article entitled, "Faculty Privileges and Abuses: A Librarian's Dilemma." She was reporter for Alabama Pattern Jury Instructions (Civil) Committee from 1978 to 2007 and was Secretary/Treasurer for that same organization from 1995 to 2007.

Becky raised a generation of Alabama law librarians and was, after State Law Librarian Bill Younger's retirement in 1992, the "Dean" of law librarians in Alabama. No law librarian, other than perhaps Bill Younger, had a greater impact on law librarianship in Alabama. The Lucille Stewart Beeson Law Library is the culmination of Becky's years of service to Cumberland Law School and to the profession of law librarianship. Thank you, Becky, for your dedication and help along the way! We will miss you!

Special Points of Interest:

- President's Column
- Becky Clapp Retires
- Alabama's Oldest Law Library
- LLAA Spring Meeting
- AALL News
- Law Librarians Make News



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2007-2008 LLAA Officers

President : Gigi Panagotacos
 Vice-Pres./ Pres.- Elect : Myra Sabel
 Secretary : Linda Hand
 Treasurer : Edward L. Craig, Jr.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Members Gigi Panagotacos, President
 Myra Sabel, President-Elect
 John Hightower, Past President
 Linda Hand, Secretary
 Ed Craig, Treasurer
 Helen Walker, Member-at-Large
 Virginia Hare, Member-at-Large

COMMITTEESBylaws

John Hightower, Chair
 Virginia Hare

Long Range Planning

C.J. Jones
 James Leonard
 Preston Peyton
 Helen Walker

Membership

Elizabeth "DeDe" Bradsher, Chair

Newsletter

Tim Lewis

Nominations

Penny Gibson
 Tim Lewis
 Helen Walker

Education & Program

Myra Sabel, Chair
 Rhoda Fleisig
 John R. Hightower
 Creighton Miller

Web Site

Mandy Haddin

Treasurer's Report Fall Meeting 2007**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Ed Craig reported the association's finances and distributed a handout.

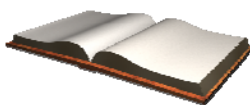
Revenues

Membership Dues	\$1,450.00
Total Revenues	\$1,450.00

Expenses

Postage \$104.60	
Fall 2007 Luncheon (estimated)	\$367.50
Total Expenses	\$472.10
Checking Account Balance	\$3356.72*
Savings Account Balance	\$4560.28

*This amount is reduced by the estimated fall 2007 Luncheon expense

**LAW LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION OF ALABAMA****Fall Business Meeting Minutes,
October 19, 2007**

President Gigi Panagotacos called the meeting to order at 10:10 am. Gigi opened by expressing thanks to Tim Lewis for hosting the meeting and Myra Sabel for all her hard work for the programs. Gigi stated the minutes from the spring 2007 meeting had been posted to the LLAA website and asked for a motion to approve. Ed Craig so moved. Tim Lewis seconded the motion and the minutes were approved without objection.

Ed Craig reported the association's finances and distributed a handout. There were no questions. Gigi asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Tim Lewis so moved, Mandy Haddin seconded the motion. It passed without objection.

Gigi asked if there were any committee reports or old business. There wasn't. New Business Gigi presented her ideas to renew the association by appointing committee chairs and to recruit members. John Hightower will chair the by-laws committee. Gigi reported that there were "sign-up" sheets in the back of the room and called for volunteers to get involved in committee work.

Gigi reported that the Alabama Library Association will meet in Birmingham April 22-25, 2008. She would like the association to consider giving a program at that meeting. Topics could be ethics or web-based legal resources.

Gigi reported that LLAA was on the rotation schedule for a visit from an AALL Board Member. She also mentioned that small chapters did not have to cover expenses for the visit.

The following items were discussed: LLAA needs to make more connections to the Alabama SLA chapter, AALL free registration; Myra attended a chapter leadership program, Scholarship committee. Membership total is 58: Sending invitations to Library Coordinators was mentioned as well as the Membership committee making calls. There was also discussion of flyers and other promotional materials. The need for additional committees, and a membership survey and strategic planning. Rob Farmer is moderating a webinar on November 15, 2007 at 1:00 pm Central. The cost is \$15.00

Gigi called for any other reports or announcements. Mandy Haddin reported her new office space located in Homewood.

There was no further business.

Gigi called for a motion to close the meeting. Ed Craig so moved and it was seconded by Virginia Hare. Gigi adjourned the meeting 10:45 am.

From the Nominations Committee:

NOMINATIONS 2008-2009

President:: Myra Sabel, Web Services Librarian, Supreme Court and State Law Library
 VP-elect : DeDe Bradsher, Bibliographic Librarian, George H. Jones, Jr. Law Library, Jones School of Law
 Treasurer : Ed Craig, Reference Librarian, Lucille Beeson Law Library, Cumberland Law School
 Secretary : Linda Hand, Director, Jefferson County Law Library

IT IS THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN! PLEASE WATCH FOR YOUR LLAA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORMS IN THE MAIL!

The SEAALL of Approval

LLAA Members Present Personnel Management Program at SEAALL

LLAA members Elizabeth “DeDe” Bradsher and Tim Lewis, along with former LLAA member, Marin Dell, planned to present an informative program on personnel issues in the law library setting. The program titled, "Playing Big Brother to Top Models, Biggest Losers, and American Idols: Surviving the Reality of Personnel Management," addressed issues dealing with difficult staff members – you know the type, the toxic tormentor, the slothful slacker, and the elusive “ideal” employee. Other topics included how to attract and retain good library personnel and the need for Information Studies programs to better prepare new librarians for the personnel issues they will experience in the real work-a-day world of law librarianship. If you are interested in this program, plan to attend the AALL edition in Portland scheduled for Tuesday July 15 at 2:45 p.m. Ms. Bradsher has accepted an AALL appointment as the Vice Chair to the new Membership Development Committee whose charge includes recruiting new and retaining seasoned members to the law library profession. DeDe is our personnel specialist!

Unfortunately, after an initial delay due to grounded airplanes, Mr. Lewis had an unexpected emergency. Tim was unable to attend the program because his wife Chris, who came to enjoy the cherry blossoms in full bloom, was admitted to the Alexandria hospital and had her gallbladder removed. Tim didn't even make an appearance at SEAALL and lamented “[I]t sure was a long way to go just to have surgery!” Best wishes Chris for a speedy recovery!

LLAA Exhibits at ALLA

President Gigi Panagatocos and LLAA member DeDe Bradsher (pictured at right sitting at the LLAA booth) represented the LLAA at the Alabama Library Association Annual Convention in Birmingham. The Law Libraries Association of Alabama is the offspring of the Law Librarians Roundtable of the Alabama Library Association so Gigi and DeDe were welcomed as long-lost kin by the members of the Alabama Library Association. Could this be the start of a beautiful friendship?



Sarah Frins Retires

Sarah Landers Frins, Technical Services Librarian for the Alabama Supreme Court and State Law Library, has retired from the Law Library after 35 years of exemplary service. In 1973, Sarah joined the Law Library staff with the daunting tasks of converting the Library's old in-house classification system to the Library of Congress classification system, and of organizing the Law Library's first technical services department. Sarah oversaw both these projects successfully, and in addition, was instrumental in the Law Library becoming a member of SOLINET. In 1990, when the Law Library became the first law library in Alabama to purchase and install an integrated library system, Sarah spearheaded the selection of the Innovative Interfaces System, a system which was later selected by the University of Alabama School of Law Library and the Thomas Goode Jones School of Law Library. During Sarah's tenure as Technical Services Librarian, the collection of three county law libraries, Madison, Jefferson and Montgomery, were cataloged and made accessible to the public through the Supreme Court and State Law Library's catalog. Sarah played a critical role in the transformation of the Law Library from a small in-house research library in an asbestos-ridden basement to a state-of-the-art public law library and legal information center.

Sarah is an active member of BPW, Business and Professional Women, and has served as the state chapter president. She has one daughter, Martina, one grandson Brennan and is expecting another grandchild in June. Thank you, Sarah, for all your hard work, your devotion to law librarianship, plus you friendship.



Alabama's Oldest Law Library

On a cold Saturday night, January 19, 1828, fifty-four judges and attorneys gathered in the drafty and dimly-lit Supreme Court Chamber in the State Capitol in Tuscaloosa, a town of about 1,600 inhabitants, situated on a bluff above the shoals of the Black Warrior River. What had prompted this gathering? Was it politics? Was it a celebration? Was it a conspiracy? No, what prompted this gathering was...law books. Yes, these fifty-four gentlemen, traipsed the windy, frigid, streets of Tuscaloosa from their lodgings to the Capitol on a Saturday night to discuss law books. What happened that night and what continued six days later on Wednesday night, January 25th was a birth, the birth of the **Library Society of the Bench and Bar of the Supreme Court**, a private, non-profit organization whose goal was to provide a library for the "exclusive use of the Bench and Bar of the Supreme Court of the State." The proceedings of these two meetings and subsequent meetings were preserved by the secretaries of the Society in a Minute Book, of which only a microfilm copy has survived.

During the Society's meeting, **John G. Aiken** was elected by the membership to serve as the first librarian for the Society's library. Four other members of the Society would administer the Library during its short lifetime. Unfortunately, despite the prestige of its membership, the Society did not generate enough revenue to maintain a satisfactory law library and on January 14, 1830, the General Assembly generously appropriated \$500.00 to the Library. Within ten years of its formation, the Society had ceased to meet, although its members still contributed to the upkeep of the Society's Library and a librarian, **Joseph Porter**, still maintained the collection.

State government needed its own library, however, so in 1838, **Governor Hugh McVay**, in

his address to the General Assembly, recommended that the State establish a library and that this newly-established "State Library" should be housed with the Library of the Society. Although money was collected by the Society and funds were disbursed for books through the year 1846, the State, for all practical purposes, took over management of both collections which were, however, kept separate. That same year, on January 28th, the General Assembly voted to make Montgomery the new state capital and on December 6, 1847, the completed Capitol was presented to the State at the beginning of the legislature's first-ever biennial session. Both libraries were moved from Tuscaloosa to Montgomery to be housed in the new Capitol.

On December 14, 1849, fire destroyed the Capitol and the greater part of the State Library was burned. Fortunately, most of the library of the Society was saved. Thereafter, the two libraries were combined, and in 1856, and again in 1858, the General Assembly actually appropriated \$1,000 for the libraries, earmarking the money for the "Supreme Court Library," the first time that the Library had been so designated. In 1859, the Assembly placed both libraries under the jurisdiction of the Marshal of the Supreme Court who was designated the "librarian of the Supreme Court Library and the State Library." The first Marshal and Librarian of the Supreme Court was **James S. Albright**, who served in both capacities from 1859 until 1860. In 1859, the General Assembly appropriated \$500 annually for the Justices to use on both libraries, thus creating two viable libraries. The next year, the Justices appointed **Junius Moore Riggs** as Marshal and Librarian and under Riggs guidance both libraries grew exponentially. After 31 years, what started as a private subscription library became one of the largest libraries in Alabama. Now, 180 years later, the **Supreme Court and State Law Library** is still providing legal information to the judges and lawyers of the State.



1900



1940



2008

Attention!

The Supreme Court & State Law Library Has New Telephone Numbers!

Main Number: (334) 229-0578
 Reference: (334) 229-0563
 Circulation: (334) 229- 0561

The toll free number (for the moment) remains the same: 800-236-4060



LAW LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION OF ALABAMA
A Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries

LLAA Spring Meeting
Friday May 16, 2008
Johnston Barton Proctor & Rose LLP
Colonial Brookwood Center 569 Brookwood Village
Birmingham, AL

- 9:00 am *Registration & Social Hour*
- 10:00 am *Time Management*
Blythe McCoy, Librarian Relations Manager, Thomson West
- So much to do, so little time. Staying current with all of the e-mails, phone calls and professional reading and the daily routine can wear down a good law librarian. Blythe will explain how law librarians can identify and prioritize their responsibilities with the goal of becoming more efficient and motivated on the job and avoid being swamped by the variety of tasks each faces.
- 11:00 am *Break*
- 11:15 am *Authentication of Online Legal Resources*
Sally Holterhoff, Immediate Past President, AALL
- Government-hosted legal resources on the Web should be both official and capable of being considered authentic--but are they? Ms. Holterhoff will discuss the findings of the 2007 AALL State-by-State Report on Authentication of Online Legal Resources and the steps that AALL has been taking to address the key issue: a significant number of state online primary legal resources are considered to be official but so far, no states have implemented ready authentication using standard methods.
- 12:15 noon *LUNCH**
- 1:15 pm *Business Meeting*
- 2:00 pm *Roundtable Discussion: Why don't we like to read on line?*
Moderator: John Hightower, Librarian, Lanier, Ford Shaver & Payne P.C.
- Research seems to indicate that part of the reason we don't like doing online research is that the experience of reading materials from a computer screen is different from reading materials printed on paper. Do you think this is valid? Why or why not? If you think that the experience is different, what can we do to make the online reading experience more like the paper reading experience—with a view toward making our work habits more efficient and productive? Do some web or book research yourself and come prepared to discuss this topic. Conclusions we reach will be published on our web site!
- 3:15 pm *Optional tour of Lucille Stewart Beeson Law Library, Cumberland School of Law*

If you plan to attend the meeting, please contact Myra Sabel, Alabama Supreme Court and State Law Library, at (334) 229-0580, or email myrasabel@yahoo.com by 5:00 p.m. Monday, May 12, 2008. Please let her know if you have any dietary restrictions and/or if you plan to stay for the tour. *Lunch is included in annual membership fees. For non-members, lunch is \$10.00.



Advocacy Workshop at AALL

Before you make your travel plans for the Annual Meeting in Portland, please consider coming a day early to join the Washington Affairs Office and the Government Relations Committee at our annual Advocacy Training workshop! Learn how to support AALL's policy agency and practice skills to become a more effective communicator with policy-makers! Attendance is available on a first-come, first-served basis and there is no cost for AALL members. Our training will be a great time to meet other members of this Advocacy listserv and to interact with other people from all over the country who are interested in advocacy!

**Navigating the Advocacy Wilderness:
Tools and Tips to Become an Effective Advocate
Legislative Advocacy Training for AALL Members
AALL Annual Meeting
Portland, OR
Saturday, July 12th, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

Learn how to support AALL's policy agenda and practice skills to become a more effective communicator! No specific background knowledge or experience is required. Attendance is available on a first-come, first-served basis and there is no cost for AALL members. You'll take away:

- Information about the Washington Affairs Office and our contagious enthusiasm for information policy
- Connections with new colleagues
- Better communications skills
- Confidence to talk to policy-makers and get your message heard
- In addition to learning about the Washington Affairs Office (WAO) and how you can become an influential advocate, you will be able to select a breakout session on an exciting issue of your choice, such as the authentication of digital legal information, funding for county law libraries or access to government information.

Join us in Portland to learn how to advocate for law libraries and yourselves!

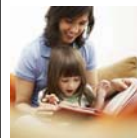


***Don't Forget the Annual Meeting !
July 12 - 15, 2008, Portland, OR
Oregon Convention Center***

"I'm of a fearsome mind to throw my arms around every living librarian who crosses my path, on behalf of the souls they never knew they saved."



Barbara Kingsolver (American Writer and Activist)



A Book for Every Child

The Social Responsibilities SIS and AALL continue the tradition of giving something back to the community that hosts our Annual Meeting with our tenth annual Children's Book Drive.

SR-SIS has selected the *Willamette Writers Books for Kids* program as the recipient of the **2008 AALL Children's Book Drive**. This book donation program distributes over 23,000 books annually to underprivileged children and teenagers served by over 50 organizations throughout the Portland area, Oregon state, and SW Washington state. The recipient agencies give the books to the children. Hospitals, shelters, literacy programs, alternative schools for homeless youth, and reading mentor programs are involved in the Books for Kids program.



More information is available at <http://www.willamettewriters.com/1/books-for-kids.php>.

Donating books is easy! Use the online AALL Book Drive 2008 Wish List at Powell's Books online (Powell's Books is based in Portland). The list includes award-winning children's titles and works requested by the Books for Kids program.

The Wish List is available via this link (<http://tinyurl.com/2hvv2c> or by searching the Powell's Wish List page, [https://www.powells.com/wish list](https://www.powells.com/wishlist), with the email: courtney-selby@utulsa.edu.

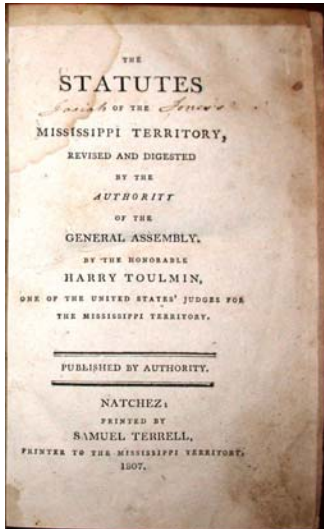
You can also donate a "gift card" from Powell's Books, <http://www.powells.com/powellscard.html>.

All books, gift cards, and monetary donations (checks made out to "AALL" should be sent to AALL Book Drive team member, Jorge Juarez. His address is below.

**Mr. Jorge Juarez
Northwestern School of Law
Lewis & Clark College
Paul L. Boley Law Library
10015 S.W. Terwilliger Blvd.
Portland, OR 97219-7799**

We will also be accepting book donations at the AALL meeting in Portland. Look for drop-off boxes in the Convention Center.

If you have questions about the book drive ("A Book for Every Child", please contact one of the members of the SR-SIS Book Drive Team (Ann Hemmens hemmens@u.washington.edu; Jorge Juarez juarez@lclark.edu; Courtney Selby courtney-selby@utulsa.edu).



Statutes of the Mississippi Territory 1807

The statutes of the Mississippi territory, revised and digested by the authority of the General assembly. By the Honorable Harry Toulmin ... Published by authority Imprint Natchez : Printed by Samuel Terrell, printer to the Mississippi territory. 1807. Descript 2 p. l., xiii, 616 p. 23 cm.

One of the rarest of law books relating to Alabama is the *Statutes of the Mississippi Territory of 1807*. Compiled by Judge Harry Toulmin, Toulmin's Digest as it was called, was printed by Samuel Terrill of Natchez who was designated by the General Assembly of the Mississippi Territory as the "Printer of the Mississippi Territory." Because the Assembly only authorized two-hundred copies to be printed, copies of the book are extremely scarce with only two known surviving copies in Alabama, one at the Samford University Library and one in the collection of the Supreme Court and State Law Library. No more than 15 copies have been cataloged by other libraries.

Judge Harry Toulmin was born in Taunton, England in 1766. By vocation he was a Unitarian minister, but in 1793, at the age of 27, he emigrated to the United States because of religious persecution. He settled in Kentucky, where he became the second president of Transylvania Seminary (now Transylvania University). As a result of connections made while President of the Seminary, Toulmin was appointed secretary of state of Kentucky and was the first compiler of that state's laws, the *Collection of the Acts of Kentucky*. In 1804, Thomas Jefferson appointed Toulmin as a judge of the Superior Court of the Mississippi Territory and Toulmin settled at Fort Stoddard, Alabama. There, in true Renaissance-man style, he served the community as a judge, postmaster, a physician, and a minister. Being the only judge in an area of more than 15,000 square miles, he "rode circuit" covering more than 1,600 miles a year on horseback through a wilderness with very few roads. According to family legend, when holding court at Blakeley, he would "sit 8 feet above the ground on the branch of a huge live oak, and literally hand down justice from on high." His judicial career spanned 15 years, during which he was involved in one of the most exciting events in the history of the Mississippi Territory. In 1807, Judge Toulmin issued the warrant for the arrest of former Vice-President Aaron Burr, who was accused of attempting to establish an independent republic in the Mississippi Territory. Family legend (again) states that the Judge and his daughter entertained Burr with games of chess in Toulmin's cabin (log of course) until he was taken via a military escort to Washington, D.C. for his trial for treason (of which he was acquitted). When Alabama became a state in 1819, Toulmin served as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in Huntsville and was elected to the state legislature. The Judge was a prolific writer, authoring several books ranging from legal practice manuals like, *Magistrate's Assistant and Review of the Criminal Law of Kentucky to The Western Country*, a book describing the western United States (which at that time was east of the Mississippi River!). Not content with compiling the laws of the Mississippi Territory, he compiled the first laws of Alabama in 1823 and died (no doubt of exhaustion) in 1824.

Toulmin's Digest, was the second Code of Mississippi Territory. The first code, compiled by Winthrop Sargent, Governor of the Territory, was published in 1799. *Toulmin's Digest* was adopted by the General Assembly on February 10, 1807 and went into effect on October 1, 1807. Toulmin was paid twelve hundred dollars for his services, including the preparation of an index to the volume. The *Digest* contains, as set out by the act adopting the Code (codified in Chapter V of the *Digest*), the acts passed at the 1807 session of the General Assembly, the ordinances and acts of Congress relating to the Mississippi territory, to land titles within the same, to intercourse with the Indian nations, and the articles of cession between the United States and the State of Georgia. Toulmin was to also include the Constitution of the United States and its amendments plus "forms, and a brief set of legal principles, for the information of the justices of the peace." The book itself is a remarkable achievement requiring an intensive effort to compile it. While it was sometimes called a digest, it is technically a codification, including, as it does, the full text of legislative acts arranged in order by subject rather than a collection of paragraphs containing concise statements of legal principles as in a digest.

Do You Want to Know More?

Read Clara Keyes Potter's article on Judge Toulmin found at <http://www.uua.org/uuhs/duub/articles/harrytoulmin.html>.



"Doing research on the Web is like using a library assembled piecemeal by pack rats and vandalized nightly."

Roger Ebert

The Law Libraries Association of Alabama (LLAA) is established to promote the profession of law librarianship, enhance the role of law librarians in the legal and library professions, assist in the further professional education of law librarians, establish a continuing relationship between law librarians and the legal entities in the State of Alabama, and to foster a spirit of cooperation among members of the library profession. The LLAA is a chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL).

"FIRMS DOWNSIZE THEIR LAW LIBRARIES WITH PROLIFERATION OF ELECTRONIC RESEARCH"

by Greg Heyman Special

Birmingham Business Journal - March 10, 2008

These days, John Bolus, an attorney with the firm, said only about 800 square feet on one floor is needed for the firm's library.

Like many things once indispensable before technology made them obsolete, the Internet has also had an impact on the libraries in some of Birmingham's largest law firms.

"Everything is done electronically now, as far as legal research," Bolus said.

There may always be a need for libraries in legal firms, but the proliferation and ease of electronic research also means that the current libraries don't necessarily command the sprawling space they did in years past.

Christina Tabereaux, director of library services with Balch & Bingham LLP said most law firm libraries are downsizing as a result of the increasing amount of information available on the Internet.

"I think that a definite change is taking place," she said.

Tabereaux said the change has helped firms free up office space by reducing the size of a library, which allows law firms like Balch & Bingham to use that space more efficiently.

No longer do hundreds of volumes of legal precedents collect dust on shelves far from an attorney's office, with the information now accessible through a few clicks of a computer keyboard.

But even though there has been a clear move toward electronic research, many legal professionals and librarians say it's unlikely law libraries will completely disappear.

Marc Ayers, an attorney with Bradley Arant Rose & White LLP believes both the use and size of law libraries has decreased in the last 15 years. Even so, he

said the libraries remain critical to the Firm's work.

"It's one of those things that you still need to have to some degree," he said.

He said one reason he believes libraries will never be totally replaced is because it's more practical to do research the old-fashioned way, despite the convenience of the Internet.

"Sometimes, books are more efficient than a computer," Ayers said. "You can flip back and forth with a book, you can tab it and you can't do that with a computer."

In addition, Tabereaux believes law libraries will always exist in some fashion because not every legal document is, or will be, available online.

"Particularly with a law firm that does some sophisticated or niche practices, there are a lot of resources or materials that are still only available in print," Tabereaux said.

And even the books and physical documents that are being discarded can find a home in a library. Law school libraries are often the recipients of the texts and documents that firms are removing from their downsized libraries.

Ed Craig, reference librarian, at Cumberland School said there are often circumstances where a law library may be missing a volume of case law and are always appreciative of contributions. "If they have one to give us, we're glad to get it," he said.

Craig said he encourages students not to become too dependent on the Internet and research software.

While a majority of legal data can now be accessed through the Internet or by using software, Craig said it's a mistake for law students to believe those resources will always be available, especially if they are

working for a smaller firm.

"As a result, they really need to learn how to use the print materials, as well as the online versions," he said. Craig said those facts alone should keep libraries relevant in the future, but Maynard Cooper's Bolus said there could be another factor, as well: a library's peace and quiet.

"It was a lot more quaint when we would actually go to a library," he said.

Bolus said technology makes research more convenient, but it also takes attorneys out of a library atmosphere where they can focus solely on reading case law, rather than at a desk where they may have other distractions, such as a telephone or e-mail.

Ayers said there's also something about a traditional law library that stirs a passion in potential hires, clients and even the attorneys.

"I'm a big believer that aesthetics matter," Ayers said. "When you walk a client in, they like to see those old books that look very classy. There's a reason they like to see that, because it's settling for a client." Ayers said volumes of books assure potential clients that they are choosing an established firm, because almost everyone has a computer.

"There's something about having a library that will always be important and that a computer just can't compete with," Ayers said.

Greg Heyman is a freelance writer based in Birmingham.

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