

**Proceedings of the Members' Open Forum
Conducted at the 101st Annual Meeting of the
American Association of Law Libraries
Held in Portland, Oregon
Monday Afternoon
July 14, 2008**

¶1 **Mr. Karl T. Gruben** (St. Thomas University Law Library, Miami Gardens, Florida): We have to follow the requirement imposed by the parliamentary procedure. Issues may be raised to the President or Executive Director for further action. This year the President or designee will respond to presentations or comments whenever she feels that it will contribute positively. The determination of whether or not to respond will be in the sole discretion of the President. Each speaker may make one comment, not to exceed three minutes, and one follow-up comment. If it seems to be ganging up or repetitive, I may cut people off and go on to another topic, and we may come back to that. Please come to one of the microphones to speak. State your name and institution.

¶2 **Ms. Carol Avery Nicholson** (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Law Library, Chapel Hill, North Carolina): Sometimes in years past we've had a formal resolution of thanks, and I notice that there wasn't one this year. So I am just going to informally thank you, the Portland Local Arrangements Committee, the Annual Meeting Program Committee, the Executive Board, the administrative staff, and anyone else who has been involved in this Annual Meeting. The city of Portland is wonderful. I know that some people were concerned about whether or not it could be hosted here. We are having a terrific time. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

¶3 **Mr. K. Gruben:** Anybody.

¶4 **Ms. Judith Meadows** (State Law Library of Montana, Helena, Montana): I wondered if the Board or the staff have any plans to evaluate the members' feelings about shortening the Annual Meeting. Shortening the meeting by a day has an effect on networking by members, and I would like to see that addressed.

¶5 **President Ann T. Fessenden** (U.S. Court of Appeals, 8th Circuit Library, St. Louis, Missouri): I can say a little bit now. We have talked about doing a survey of the membership after this meeting, mainly on why they chose to come to Portland, because we're so thrilled so many people came. We could address some questions about meeting length, although we feel we need to give it enough time to try it out. It's only been two years. And, of course, many members felt the cost of the longer days was not possible, but it's a difficult balance, and we can certainly take a look at that.

¶6 **Mr. K. Gruben:** It's your meeting, ladies and gentlemen, speak now and get it off your chest.

¶7 **Mr. Mark Estes** (Holme Roberts & Owen, Denver, Colorado): I encourage the Board to follow the spirit of the Bylaws, which include transparency and participation in the governance of the Association. The next time we hold the mail ballot, there should be a time provided when members can comment on the issue presented in the ballot. While I generally agree it was a not a controversial ballot issue, we heard that at least forty people voted in opposition to the amendments.

¶8 I submit that some of the proposals were not quite such simple matters of housekeeping as they might appear. The report as adopted changed some of the authorities and powers of the new Vice President/President-Elect to select committee members. These may not be important issues to many members, but we deserve an opportunity to comment on them, and we did not have that for this election. Thank you.

¶9 **Ms. Margaret K. Maes** (Legal Information Preservation Alliance, Bloomington, Indiana): This comment concerns the daily convention newspapers of the last few years, which in my mind have become increasingly about vendor content, not about our programming or news and issues of our Association. It seems to me that advertising in the newspaper is important and probably helps offset the cost, but now we have a daily newspaper that is almost exclusively articles about development of products and vendor issues. I'd like to suggest that that should be reversed. (Applause.).

¶10 **Mr. K. Gruben:** Anybody else?

¶11 **Ms. C. Nicholson:** I would like to follow up with what Mark said. I know there were a couple of puzzled expressions. I remember that I voted against those bylaws because there was some little wording that wasn't quite right, and I felt like it was too late to say anything about it, so I just voted no. So I just want to reiterate what he said about having opportunity for comment.

¶12 **Mr. K. Gruben:** Thank you.

¶13 **Mr. Ryan Overdorf** (University of Toledo College of Law Library, Toledo, Ohio): My question has to do with a couple of events that are typically held off-site that are not being held off-site this year, such as the Westlaw party. It is entirely possible that this has already been communicated to the membership, and I overlooked it, but do these represent permanent changes that will be continued at future conferences, or was this a one-time thing? How did the events get scheduled on-site rather than off-site?

¶14 **Mr. K. Gruben:** You are speaking about the vendor-sponsored event?

¶15 **Mr. Overdorf:** Yes, the Westlaw party and the Opening Reception, which are usually held off-site, were not this year.

¶16 **President Fessenden:** It's entirely the vendor decision, unless it's actually an AALL event. For example, having the Academic SIS's event on-site rather than off-site was a decision of the Academic SIS, I understand, because on-site was cheaper.

¶17 **Ms. Janet Sinder** (Thurgood Marshall Law Library, University of Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland): Speaking as someone who was the coordinator of an SIS-sponsored program, I'd like to suggest that these programs be more integrated into the list of scheduled programs, rather than having the official programs in one place and then somewhere else in the program having a listing of the SIS programs. I don't see why those can't be listed in the time slots with the main track of programs. (Applause.)

¶18 **Mr. K. Gruben:** Any more? All right.

¶19 **Ms. Shirley Hart David** (Kailua-Kona, Hawaii): This is for the new committee. I've been experiencing a problem where I continue to get dropped from the listserv, and I feel that there are others who are having the same problem. After I realize it's happening, I have to go back in and sign up for the listserv again. There is no place listed where you can ask somebody to help you with that. It's a continual problem, so if they can look into that and see what the technical problem is and actually have somebody that you can contact on a list when you have issues.

¶20 **Mr. K. Gruben:** Thank you.

¶21 **President Fessenden:** The staff will check into it.

¶22 **Mr. K. Gruben:** Thank you very much. Anybody else experience that? Okay.

¶23 **Ms. Christine Graesser** (Brown Rudnick Berlack Israels, Hartford, Connecticut): Headquarters is aware of this, and I know they're working on it, but it has been a problem for a number of people. The current and past chair of the AALLNET Committee want to resolve this.

¶24 **Mr. Charles R. Dyer** (Consultant & Retired Public Law Library Director, Bellingham, Washington): There has been within the Association a large contingent of retired people who are remaining active after taking retirement. I think the Association needs to consider those people as continuing valued members of the Association in the sense that it encourages their appointment to committees and other useful things along with other benefits of membership.

¶25 I think we should work to retain some of these people. This is especially true, I think, in the county law libraries, when retirement comes up. And we then find ourselves when we retire with time for Association activities. So I'd like to ask for help on that.

¶26 **Mr. K. Gruben:** Anybody?

¶27 **Ms. Leslie Campbell** (Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, Washington, D.C.): I work at the Administrative Office of the United States Courts and I'm past chair of the Social Responsibilities SIS. First I want to state what wonderful community service activities AALL does. I participated in New Orleans, and I especially appreciate the support you gave us, and I just want to urge all of the members to continue to do that.

¶28 We'll be in D.C. in 2009, and the last meeting there we did some programs in disadvantaged schools, and we hope to organize something again. I want to

develop support for doing such things in the future. It's important for us to put our mouths where our money is and make sure we support the communities we visit every year. (Applause.)

¶29 **Mr. K. Gruben:** Thank you. As you can see, you don't have to have a gripe. You can pitch a cause. So anybody else? Did I see Ron get up there? Okay. We have time, okay. We've got almost an hour. (Laughter.) Anybody? Lee? Lee? Don't be shy. No one else? Going once, twice; I get to use the gavel. Thank you.