

# State, Court & County Law Libraries

# NEWS

Newsletter of the State, Court & County SIS of the American Association of Law Libraries

## Chair's Chit Chat

The articles which fill this issue recapture the excitement generated by the AALL Annual Meeting.

This opportunity to meet face to face once a year plays a vital part in how the business of our section takes place. Committees meet. Projects begun the year before come to conclusion. We solicit volunteers. Strategies are developed for the year ahead. New initiatives begin.

You will find hints in these pages about exciting projects already underway.

The **Strategic Quality Management Planning Committee** expects to draft and distribute a plan to the membership for review and comment before our meeting next July. To accomplish this goal, the committee will be completing a series of tasks which will involve member participation. The **Newsletter** staff will be developing an advertising plan and will inaugurate a regular column featuring issues of interest to the solo librarian. **Membership and Mentoring** will prepare a recruitment campaign targeted at those AALL members who work in libraries which match our SIS profile. **Trustee Development** will continue plans to revise the Sourcebook and prepare for a second function at next year's meeting with library trustees and members of library governing bodies.

More details will appear in later issues about the activities of other section committees.

What our section can accomplish depends upon the ability of each of us to balance the expectations of our "real jobs" and our lives away from the workplace with

the commitments we have made as volunteers. Sixty-four of us have agreed to test our personal balancing skills this year. There's always room for more! If you have an idea or know of an opportunity that just can't wait until next year, please let me or one of the committee chairs know.

*Jean Holcomb, Chair  
King County Law Library, Seattle, WA*



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## **Cyberspace and the E-Frontier:** Impressions from the AALL Annual Meeting held in Anaheim

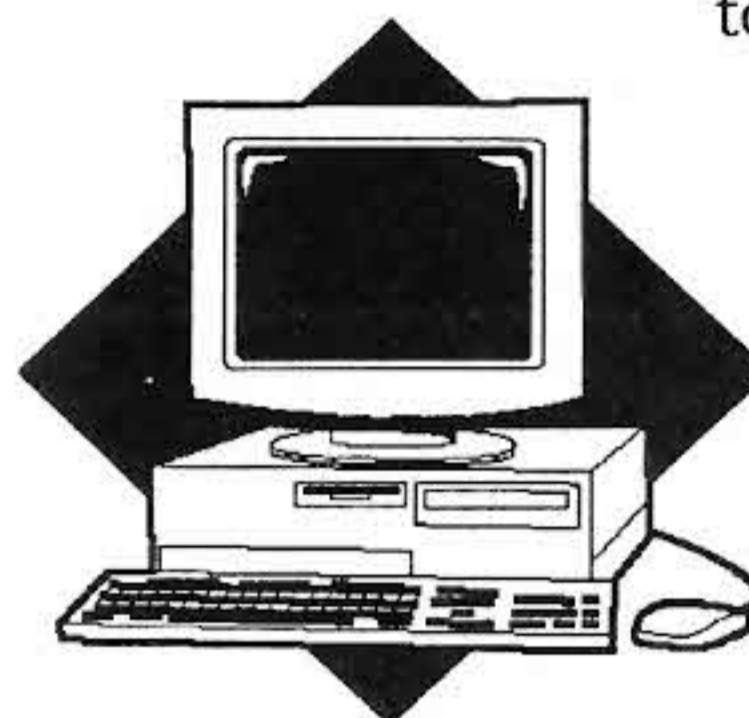
The Internet is quickly becoming the place for electronic information access (e-mail, the World Wide Web, Internet-based online services in lieu of CD-ROMs, and Intranets launched in the Web browser). This was apparent at the American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting in Anaheim held in July. This is an exciting opportunity for law librarians to make significant contributions to the expanding world of cyberspace or the "e-frontier," and to the future role of law libraries.

Perhaps the most impressive thing about the conference was discovering the variety of online information, created, organized, and managed by librarians. For a great example, see the Law Library Resource Exchange (LLRX) Web site on the Internet at <http://www.llrx.com>. Additionally, online training resources, Intranets, and knowledge management are other areas where law librarians are leading the way. So how do we reach the new frontier and avoid getting left behind? Here are some of the highlights of the AALL meeting that I found inspiring:

**Embrace change.** This is the most exciting time for librarians - adapting to new technologies is nothing new to us. We're needed more than ever to help organize the information overload of the Internet and Intranets, to train people in using information technologies, and to lead the way in creating adaptable, user-friendly information systems, regardless of media format.

**Take the lead.** Internally within your organization, or externally in your community, have the law library initiate programs in areas in which you excel.

**Be an advocate.** Make sure everyone is aware of your law library. Talk to people in upper management, administration, or



to others who have the power to assist you financially or politically. Tell the decision-makers outside your library what you're doing, what your skills and goals

are. Make sure you are aware of issues the decision-makers outside the library face. Learn to talk to them in terms they can understand. Create an awareness of the law library among local government, the political arena, and the community. Key players outside the law library will be more likely to support you if they understand you.

**Be pro-active.** You may think you don't have time, but if you focus 20% of your efforts on long-term benefits, then 80% of the results of your work will be positive and effective. Skip some of the busy work, although you may excel at it, if it doesn't support your library's mission and objectives. Focus your efforts on adding value.

**"Don't just survive, thrive":** Gail Warren delivered an inspiring message, which for me, clearly summed up all the information I received. Most libraries do not have enough money, staff, or time to accomplish everything needed. Rather than accept the circumstances and simply survive, law librarians should find a mentor, learn to think and speak like a business manager, be pro-active rather than reactive, and focus on adding value to everything they do. Law librarians can volunteer in SCCLL & AALL activities to learn from others and share what they know. We can accomplish more if we work together.

