Uniting Behind a Clear Vision

Michael S. Miller, SCCLL Chair
Maryland State Law Library

It’s 9/12/02; I’m sitting in my father’s kitchen in a small town in South Central PA, preparing to draft my first column as your new SIS Chair. Pops, as we affectionately refer to him, had some minor eye surgery yesterday (successful) and I made the trek from Annapolis, Maryland to be with him during the first hours of the healing process — it may be slow for a 90 year old. Yesterday, in this part of the country the weather was almost a mirror image of what we experienced a year ago to the day — bright blue skies with a warm September sun. My day began with a simple but remarkably moving commemoration of 9/11 on the front steps of the Courts of Appeal Building in Annapolis. It seemed like it was just yesterday instead of 12 months ago, that I had received a frantic call from my oldest son Eric, a State Department Security Advisor attached to the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade wanting to know if his Mom & Dad were okay. The day long informational barrage of words, images and sounds commemorating this anniversary has made my job of communicating with you about state, court and county law libraries seemingly insignificant. In quick retrospect however, suggesting that our work as stakeholders in providing access to the justice system and rule of law of this nation, is by no means a lightweight mission for our membership. So here goes!

I would like to thank the membership for the vote of confidence in placing me in the position of writing this column. Without sounding like a trite politico, I will do my best to address your concerns as members of this SIS by having our leadership – the Executive Board and the various Standing and Special Committees, stay on target with both successful existing initiatives as well as a few new efforts to bolster membership bennies and make us a more focused SIS within our parent Association. Recent history has smiled broadly upon our group and I, for one, would like to acknowledge the leadership and achievements of our past chairs, officers and “working stiffs” (Committees) for finding the time and enthusiasm in their frantic workplace lives to contribute to our causes. Speaking of causes, I’m a 60’s kind of guy (1960 and otherwise) who grew up with all kinds of well-intentioned schemes to solve societal ills. Now societal ill problem-solving has given way to “are my wife and I gonna have enough left in the IRA and 401K to retire to a decent standard of living?” This is a question many of the “grayer hairs” continue to ponder today, though is not an issue for SCCLL to focus on in 2002-03. My theme for the next year has a lot to do with words and concepts such as vision, mission, best practices, survival, proving our value, harnessing technology, forecasting and identifying trends, inclusiveness, and above all, doing a much better job of marketing ourselves and our libraries.

Uniting behind a clear vision and mission statement are the foundations of effective membership recruitment and retention for all types of organizations. It’s time for our SIS to take a close look at how we view the nature and concept of our future business, describe our major philosophical premises and re-establish what SCCLLers plan to do and for whom. In many respects the strategic planning process, which has been created and shepherded so well as our key planning roadmap, has provided our SIS with direction, goals and objectives and tangible results. In addition to the continuing work of the Strategic Planning Committee in revising and refreshing that document, I have asked our By-Laws Committee, chaired by Jerry Stephens, to formalize and expand upon language appearing in that Plan, in Article II (Purpose clause) of the Bylaws. A vision statement is an idealized view of a desirable and potentially achievable future state where or what an organization would like to be. The Mission statement, on (View from the Chair Continued on page 5)
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SCCLL News
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The Deadline for the next issue is December 15, 2002
Articles and forms should be submitted via electronic mail to:
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The State, Court & County Law Libraries SIS does not assume any responsibility for the statements advanced by the contributors in this newsletter. The opinions expressed in SCCLL News are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SCCLL SIS.

SCCLL News 2
Editor’s Etchings
Glad to be of Service

Mary Ann Parker, Editor
Department of Water Resources Law Library
Sacramento, CA

This issue starts my second year as Editor of the SCCLL Newsletter. This time around I will not have to struggle learning the requirements of MS Publisher and Adobe Distiller like I did last year. Experience and a new computer have solved the problem and I plan to get out a good looking product with lots of timely and interesting information for the SCCLL membership.

I see the format of the newsletter changing this year as our members do not rely as heavily as before on it for news. The listserv and the website are breaking news long before it appears in print. Having said this, I am also aware of the newsletter’s archival value. Items that are reported in these pages will be there always, so do not hesitate to make announcements or record events that you want to be part of the record of our SIS. I’m glad to be of service to the membership in this way.

I would like to see more feature articles. We are lucky that Charles Dyer is continuing to contribute to Charley’s Corner this year. I also will want to see articles about noteworthy events at your library. And we all enjoy keeping up with member news.

We will not carry advertising this year unless it is for a specialized product relating to our type of library. We are grateful to our sponsors but appreciate they can contribute to support our SIS in other ways.

Thanks to Gail Warren, Anne Morrison and Marcus Hochstetler who sent me photos of the Business Meeting and Reception at Orlando. Look for these and an Elvis sighting throughout this issue.

It may be a new year, but I can’t let go of my theme from last year – “Starved for content”. Still am, so send your contributions my way. Note the December 15 deadline for submissions to the next issue.

SCCLL List

All members are automatically added to the list.

To send a message to everyone on the list, send e-mail to:

sccll-sis@aallnet.org

King County Law Library Receives Grant from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

New Training Center Opened in August

Jean Holcomb, Law Librarian
King County Law Library

The Grant Application Process
King County residents who turn to the justice system for help face many challenges. Self-represented litigants, especially those of low or moderate means, must overcome barriers linked to information and legal literacy, economic limits, and access to technology and the Internet. In spite of the explosion of available resources on the Internet, gateways to critical justice system information such as court forms and procedural documents remain closed for the low and moderate income citizens who form the largest part of the King County Law Library’s patron base. These law library users seldom have access to technology and the Internet from home or from outside the home.

To begin to address the computer and Internet legal research needs of the citizens who use our library, the Library sent a letter of inquiry in August of 2001 to the Community Access to Technology grant program of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. We asked for a grant of $36,893.00 to establish a Training Center for Computer and Internet Legal Research with six workstations and an instructor’s terminal in our Seattle Library. The Gates Foundation invited the Library to make a formal proposal. In October, we submitted a formal proposal in which we identified nine community partners who would support the Library’s efforts should

(King County Continued on page 4)
Goals and Objectives
The Training Center will accomplish the following goals and objectives:

- Expand the options for meaningful access to computer and Internet based justice system information for county residents of low and moderate means, enabling them to better understand their legal rights and obligations.
- Create a more seamless continuity of process for citizens who come to the courthouse to use court services by providing a center where documents may be prepared using forms and instructions from computer and Internet sources.
- Broaden the range of Library resources by integrating web resources for non-English speaking patrons into the collection to ensure that diverse learning styles may be accommodated.
- Fulfill goals in the Library's strategic and technology plans to enhance the role of the Library's staff as teachers and trainers, to provide a setting for formal and informal learning opportunities geared to the needs of citizen litigants, and to make the resources of the Library's web site available for patrons to use in the Library as well as from remote locations.

Intended Audience and Services
Over 2,000 people use the Seattle branch of our Library each week. 54 percent of reference service interactions involve members of the general public. The numbers of low and moderate-income residents that represent themselves in actions before the courts continues to grow. In areas such as domestic relations actions, more than 60 percent of the filings have at least one of the parties appearing without legal representation. In Washington, a wide range of entities now provide legal information geared for the needs of the general public on their websites. Yet, many who search for legal information lack the training and access to Internet technology.

Through the Training Center, KCLL will provide instruction and hands-on access to vital resources for those low and moderate income citizens navigating the justice system on their own. The Center will magnify the usefulness of the Library’s paper resources for this audience, pairing secondary resources and staff direction with workstations where forms may be completed for filing. The Center will enhance the service already provided by the Library as a referral resource for agencies and departments within the courthouse, as well as for the wider legal service provider community. The Center will serve as a location for the staff to present CLE seminars and other specialized training focused on the needs of attorney users. The Center will provide a model for other public law libraries that are addressing similar population needs and will provide a setting to test the principles of the Access to Justice Board’s Technology Bill of Rights project.

Donor and Community Partners
The staff is excited about the new opportunities and appreciates the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and our community partners:

- The Administrative Office of the Courts of the State of Washington
- Columbia Legal Services
- The Information School, University of Washington
- King County Bar Association Board of Trustees
- King County Superior Court Ex Parte and Probate Committee
- The Northwest Justice Project
- The Communication and Technology Committee of the Washington State Bar Association Access to Justice Board
- The Council on Pubic Legal Education of the Washington State Bar Association Access to Justice Board
- The Technology Bill of Rights Project of the Washington State Bar Association Access to Justice Board

Implementation Planning
Construction of the Training Center started in April of 2002. The Library staff designed the floor plan for the Center and worked with the County’s facilities management staff to oversee construction. Because the Library will be moved out of our courthouse space during the building’s seismic renovation project in the spring of...
2003, we designed the Training Center as a wireless network in consultation with the County’s IT department. In addition to physical construction and telecommunications planning, the staff drafted a Training Center use policy, revised our web site disclaimer language and created a web privacy policy statement for the Library Board’s approval. We developed a library Intranet to serve as the Training Center platform and created curriculum for the Intranet. We designed tools to evaluate and track how the Center is used. We developed staff training tools to prepare the staff to help library patrons use the resources and services available in the Training Center.

The Training Center’s doors opened in early August for a two month testing period. During this testing period, the staff will be making adjustments and learning along with those we train. We are planning an open house for our community partners and the project’s supporters on October 8th. To learn more about the Training Center, visit the library’s web site at www.kcll.org.

promoting best practices is a “no brainer” workplace concept that has caught on in both private and governmental sectors. What do we have to learn from creative ideas, strategies and initiatives that have been successfully implemented in many of our public, academic and private law libraries? That is a rhetorical question – we have everything to gain from replicating the success of that gutsy state law library in the next state over who designed and adopted consortia guidelines for legal publishers who want to license electronic resources in public county law libraries in that state. What about that clearinghouse of job descriptions for SCCLL type libraries that was created by an AALL chapter, or the successful implementation of a 24/7 live reference service at a California county public law library, or that outreach service promoting legal information literacy, or the productive grant writing experience that landed PC’s from the Gates Foundation into county law libraries in Washington State. The list goes on and on. In the spirit of a collaborative, collegial joint enterprise our SIS web site, in concert with Newsletter editors, will be establishing an informal page devoted to documenting recent SCCLL member innovative pilot programs, activities and success stories. The weight of such a venture falls squarely on the shoulders of the membership, so step up to the plate and let Mary Ann Parker, your Newsletter editor, or Karla Gedell, the SIS webmaster, in on your library’s new or innovative accomplishment(s). We hope to eventually develop a clearinghouse, of sorts, which will be archived on the SIS web site.

The final major area of concentration during the next two years (no coup d’etat here- Charley Dyer gets his chance starting next July) will be an effort to create a practical, realistic marketing plan for state, court and county law libraries. A Special Committee on Marketing, co-chaired by Maureen Well and Marnie Warner, has been created and charged with an
ambitious effort to issue a law library marketing concept paper, look for funds to contract with a professional library consultant to conduct a controlled pre-marketing needs assessment survey and recommend to the SCCLL Executive Committee an action plan to develop a practical marketing plan that can be used by any member library. Facing the ultimate challenge – survival, and others such as proving our worth, forecasting and identifying trends, knowing who our customers are or will be, as well as knowing their needs, harnessing technology to keep us competitive, are all issues that an astute marketing strategy can begin to address.

The marketing management literature is clear about one thing: focus on constituencies first, then shape the organization and its activities to meet their needs. The library’s users – its stakeholders – represent its most important resource. We cannot survive without their support. Without a clear understanding of our community of users and parent organizations, we will be in a poor position to provide for their information needs. In such scenarios, the increasing availability of technologically mediated legal information alternatives become even more attractive to potential customers. Our initiative here is to significantly expand upon the seven SCCLL Resource Guides ("How to Hire a State, Court or County Law Librarian" due out in October, 2002) and, in absentia, provide a mini-marketing "officer" for your library. A good friend of mine who formerly worked in Maryland public libraries, recently authored an article in Library Journal on marketing. This quote captures the essence of the issue:

"I'm interested in how we can market what we do, so that we're the relevant place in the public's mind... with a son who is 24 and a daughter who is 16, I'm worried about generation Y, a generation that has completely integrated technology into their lives. If we are going to survive we have to find ways to be there for them." Rivkah Sass, Multnomah County Library, OR.

In closing, let's celebrate our 30th anniversary as a precursor to the formal SIS, celebrate our uniqueness, commonality and collegial interactions with one another. Help me in thanking Regina Smith for another outstanding fund raising effort at the Orlando Silent Auction, Marcus Hochstetler and his Education Committee for submitting 14 program proposals for the Seattle conference, Lisa Mecklenberg-Jackson for her Committee's efforts in launching the first of seven

“SCCLL ROCK”ed Orlando!

The King Made an Appearance

Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson
SCCLL Publicity Chair

The King was alive and well in Orlando... thanks to SCCLL member Marcus Hochstetler (Mahoning Law Library Association, Youngstown, OH). Marcus was the only SCCLL member "brave" enough to don the black vinyl Elvis suit at the SCCLL table in the activities area of AALL. The SCCLL table displayed a collection of Presley memorabilia, including a talking Elvis in gold lame, all brought together under the theme of "SCCLL ROCKS!" The table garnered a lot of attention. Especially when Marcus Presley took the stage!

Anne McDonald was the winner of the $50 Amazon gift certificate given away at the table for volunteering to serve on an SCCLL Committee. Anne volunteered to serve on the SCCLL Publicity Committee.

Speaking of the SCCLL Publicity Committee, we could use your help. We'd like to put together a fun Power-Point for the 2003 SCCLL Annual Meeting showing pictures of SCCLL librarians in action. The pictures can be funny, serious, work-related or non. Anything goes. It will be very entertaining—especially if we get lots of people to participate. So, send in your photos. Digital via e-mail, ljackson@state.mt.us, works best, but a print I can scan works too. (All photos will be returned). Please participate—and help keep SCCLL ROCKin'. Right, Marcus?

In Orlando Reports...
SCCLL Resource Guides, and Maureen Well and the Standards Committee for the County Public Law Library Standards revision. A thank you goes to every committee chair and volunteer who continue to make SCCLL a member-involved organization.

Seattle or Bust!
Strategies to Get Your Law Library Trustee to the AALL Annual Meeting Without Busting the Budget

Donna Bausch
Norfolk Law Library

If you start now, you can make it possible for one or more of your law library’s governing board members to attend the Annual Meeting in Seattle. Getting a trustee interested in attending a meeting in Seattle is the easy part – who wouldn’t want to visit Seattle in July? Perhaps more daunting is the prospect of financing their travel, lodging and AALL registration fees.

The AALL Chapter VIP program is one sure fire strategy that you ignore at your own peril. It’s a truly painless way to get full free registration to the Annual Meeting for your trustee – over a $500 value – at no expense to your trustee, your library budget or your chapter. I’ve done it twice with Norfolk Law Library trustees, and it’s been a wonderfully positive and simple undertaking.

Simply ask your AALL chapter to name your trustee as their Chapter VIP for 2003. Each chapter is permitted 2 VIPs, and some chapters do not take advantage of this program unless a chapter member prompts their participation.

The chapter may be as involved in the VIP process as it chooses. It need not do anything more than submit the name of the VIP to AALL. However, the chapter may have their VIP attend chapter events at AALL or invite the VIP to write an article for the chapter newsletter or attend a chapter meeting back home and address the chapter in person.

Some chapters underwrite the travel and lodging costs of their VIPs, and others do not have the resources to do so. It does not hurt to ask your chapter for support beyond the VIP nomination itself. If your library must underwrite the additional expenses itself, consider the SCCLL grant program to make up part of the difference – or use some of the funds that would have paid for staff travel and apply for grants to cover those expenses and apply the funds to the trustee’s costs. With enough planning and lead-time, the funds can be found – if you start planning now.

The silent auction, coordinated for the second year by Regina Smith, was a great success, earning over $1600 for SCCLL.
Chapter VIPs have been uniformly effusive about their AALL experiences. They come away from their annual meeting experiences more impressed than ever by law librarianship and the programs they attend. Whether judges, attorneys, librarians, media types or elected officials, Chapter VIPs enjoy and value their experiences and serve as the best possible ambassadors for our profession and our libraries.

Do you wish that your governing board members were more enthusiastic or more well versed in current law library issues? Do you want to have a board member with a passion for your law library? Bring them to the AALL annual meeting. For more information on the AALL Chapter VIP program, visit AALLNET at: www.aallnet.org/vipman.htm.

The VIP handbook will take you through the VIP process step by step from start to finish. VIPs are invited to many special events at the Annual Meeting. You might worry that spending every moment of the annual meeting with your boss is not exactly your idea of the ideal AALL meeting. You absolutely need not escort your trustee to every program and social event. The detailed annual meeting program combined with the interests of your trustee will result in an agenda that meets their needs. After all, your trustee is a professional, a leader and far too independent to want a 24-hour escort. Once they attend the SCCLL Trustee orientation and luncheon that you will hear more about in an upcoming issue, they will be ready to enjoy the rest of the meeting on their own.

Don’t pass up the chance to save money for your library by using this wonderful AALL program. The benefits that you, your chapter and your library will reap are countless.

Get started by visiting AALLNET and contacting your chapter president. You’ll be glad you did. I look forward to seeing lots of trustees as Chapter VIPs in Seattle next summer!

See Judge Freedman’s article immediately following for Donna’s advice in action. ED.

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A California County Law Library Trustee’s First AALL Annual Meeting

Robert B. Freedman
Judge of the Superior Court, Alameda County

I thought I knew a lot about law libraries. After all, as a law student, lawyer and now Superior Court judge, I had spent uncounted hours in law libraries and as a patron of law library services. More recently, as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Bernard E. Witkin Alameda County Law Library, I began to glean some insight into the financial and operational complexities of operating a modern county law library. Then I went to Orlando and learned how little I really knew!

I was privileged to attend the 95th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) at Orlando, Florida on July 20-24, 2002 in my capacity as a trustee and generously facilitated by a VIP Grant from NOCALL. Although I pored over the advance program materials, I was still unprepared for the breadth and scope of presentations, business and social events and vendor exhibits.

Fortunately, our Law Library Director, Cossette Sun, in the best tradition of information management, was able to guide me in selecting from among the many offerings those that would be most interest to a county law library trustee. As readers of this publication will likely know, Cossette has just concluded her term as a member of the AALL Executive Board. Having known Cossette for many years, it came as no surprise, but was nonetheless gratifying to observe the respect and affection she enjoys among her AALL peers. Although this no doubt facilitated my introduction to many meeting attendees, I was independently made to feel welcome by all the participants I encountered.

Following are some impressions and considerations for other county (or similar public agency) law library trustees contemplating attendance at a future AALL Annual Meeting:

- In our association with a particular law library we may not reflect often on the fact that law libraries and law librarians are found in a variety of settings i.e. the realm of state, county and

(California Trustee Continued on page 9)
government law libraries, in contrast to academic (law school) and private (law firms, corporate). The Special Interest Section organizational structure of AALL accommodates this variety while providing a forum for matters of common concern. For example, the shift from print to electronic media presents challenges to all law libraries in one way or another.

- Attendance by public law library trustees is apparently of comparatively recent origin and fairly limited in numbers. In part this is understandable. A law library trustee serves as a board member, dealing with broad policy and general budget issues, not micromanaging daily operational matters. Those are the responsibilities of our highly professional directors and staff. It would be a rare trustee, indeed, who happened to be a trained law librarian and you should have no illusions of returning from an AALL meeting qualified to serve as a law librarian. You will, however, learn much that will assist in you in your fiduciary responsibilities as a trustee and be better prepared to evaluate the manner in which your law library serves its patrons and the public and legal community in which it operates.

- Get the “big picture” – In a state as large as California, where we pride (and sometimes delude) ourselves that we are always on the leading edge of technology and public services, attendance at an AALL Annual meeting will give you a more realistic perspective on a national and even international basis.

- Bring home some ideas: Attending a five day conference is not a substitute for years of higher education and professional experience, but within the scope of a trustee’s duties you will have the opportunity to learn much about what other similar libraries are doing in terms of strategic planning, budget and revenue alternatives, community involvement and adapting to technological change.

My recommendation to other county and public law library trustees: Go to Seattle! The 96th Annual Meeting of AALL is scheduled for July 12th to 16th, 2003 in Seattle, Washington. Certainly not every law library trustee should plan to attend every year (remember you are a trustee, not a law librarian!), but rotating participation among trustees over a period of time will do much to enrich board participation for the trustee, support the professional staff and permanently endow your library service with a perspective not readily available in any other way.

I returned from Orlando better informed about the challenges faced by law libraries generally, comforted to know how well our own library operates, even in the face of budgetary limitations faced by all governmental agencies, and energized to continue service as a law library trustee. I am confident that any trustee who chooses to attend a future meeting will have a similarly rewarding experience.
“Elvis” put in an appearance at the SCCLL Table in the Activities Area.

The SCCLL Reception was held in the historic Orange County Courthouse.
SCCLL West Customer Service Update Luncheon
Kay McClain
Office of Attorney General, Indianapolis, IN

Connecting with customers as they took their “Road Show” around the country, West's library relations team obviously listened when we griped and when we praised. Anne Ellis opened the SCCLL luncheon/meeting in Orlando with a recap of the road show before turning it over to Mary Anne Marlowe, Kristine Keller, and Mark J. Witzany.

Mary Anne's presentation of "Now and Next" stressed that librarians are the reason this team exists, and customers are the center of West's focus. Statistics show that there are 7,000 law librarians in the United States with access to legal information. Changes in how we access this information have led to new presses and new systems as the "now" of West's focus comes into being.

"Next" enhancements for West's customers include "Customer Self-Service," a web-based channel controlled by customers (available Spring 2003). RPM Online will be available Fall 2002, enabling the customer to manage their firms' password needs.

Kristine Keller spoke about issues regarding billing for both hard copy and online resources. It was quickly apparent that this was a touchy subject as several librarians spoke out about recent problems with invoices and shipping notices. Stressing their desire to create customer-friendly documents, Kristine went into detail to explain the invoices for each category of business activity. She also noted that new subscription notices will be available following AALL and added that librarians can now request an "account review."

QuickView+ is a feature where user/client reports can be customized with choices of how to access this information. These options include Westlaw user IDs; active/inactive passwords for the past six months; and automatic reports sent as an e-mail. Defaults of reports can be customized to be available on a daily/weekly/bi-weekly/monthly basis.

Mark J. Witzany quickly closed the meeting by talking about the impact of "Service Realities" as affecting customers. Among the areas being addressed are: back orders; subscription notices (available August 2002); filing instructions; manufacturing errors; password administration (also available Fall 2002); and communication and support.

As a side note, it was announced that SCCLL will be featured next year on "Newsline" and that "Life in the Fast Lane" is available for local programming by contacting Anne Ellis.

New Members/Member News

Compiled by Donna Gagnon
San Diego County Public Law Library

Judy Chalmers is the new Technical Services Librarian at the Washoe County Law Library in Reno, NV. She had been a business and regulatory research analyst at Sierra Pacific Power in Reno. Judy completed her MLS in 1996 at Texas Woman’s University. She has served as the Nevada Director of Education for the Sierra Nevada Chapter of SLA for several years.

Dan Cordova, reference librarian at the U. S. Courts Tenth Circuit Library (Denver, CO), has been accepted into the Federal Courts Leadership program. Sponsored by the Federal Judicial Center, the program is a 2 ½ year combination of online instruction, workshops, and self-directed projects which is designed to develop leadership and management skills of court personnel.

Donna M. Gagnon is the new South Bay Branch Librarian at the San Diego County Public Law Library. Her previous position was as Assistant Librarian at Gray, Cary, Ware & Freidenrich, LLP. She has served as Treasurer for the San Diego Area Law Libraries.

Alice McKenzie, the director of the Contra Costa County (CA) Public Law Library, is a new member.

Mary Rice is a new member to SCCLL-SIS. She has been the law librarian at the Charles County Circuit Court Law Library for about 3 years. She is about half way through her MLIS via the distance education option from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Prior to this, she practiced law.
Charley’s Corner:  
**The Weight of Democracy**  

Charles R. Dyer, Director of Libraries, San Diego County Public Law Library  

*Nothing in this column represents the view of my Library or its Board of Trustees. These are just my personal opinions.*

Why am I tired? Trying to get the governor to veto some bad legislation, dealing with my eighty-six-year-old father’s cantankerous ways, fighting a late summer cold, stressing over preparations for a fund raising dinner, hiring a new tech services librarian—these could all be part of it. But I think the real pall over me as I write this column during the week of September 11 is the sadness, sorrow, rage we all feel this first anniversary. However, I have an extra element that most Americans don’t have, but perhaps share with you who work in state, court, and county law libraries do.

September 11 was a tragic disruption in the ordinary lives of most Americans, a reminder that freedom and democracy cannot be taken for granted, but must be won and supported through positive acts. Government officials argue publicly whether personal liberties should be suppressed for the sake of security. The argument continues. The outcome is not guaranteed. Several commentators have noted that the United States has many social forces acting on it that were similar to those which Germany faced in the early 1930’s.

Public law libraries, and to some extent those libraries serving courts and governmental agencies, are inventions made to help secure our freedoms and our democracy. Every day, we, as law librarians, see people who have no political power find out about their legal rights and make plans to get them. They have legal rights. That’s the first good thing. Law libraries and law librarians help them find out what those rights are. That’s the second good thing. Courts, lawyers, and some governmental agencies help them exercise those legal rights. That’s the third good thing. Without the second good thing, the third one is hard to obtain, and eventually we lose all three.

The detention of over a thousand people without a public hearing is appalling to me. I comprehend the arguments for secrecy when battling terrorism, but that does not mean that we should ever give up those legal rights we have worked so hard to maintain. The United States has incarcerated people before during war time without true provocation to our later shame and regret. Pearl Harbor led to the Japanese internment camps. Similar events have occurred throughout our history. The federal judge that ruled these latest “internments” were illegal was a very brave person, and she should be acclaimed. She could not have said it better, “Democracy dies behind closed doors.”

Sometimes we use a phrase so often, we forget its deeper meaning. I am afraid that the phrase “access to justice” is becoming one of those phrases we treat too lightly. The ability of each member of a society to cry out for equal treatment under the law is an amazing thing. Law libraries are indeed a central part of that ability. When that ability is restricted for a few, it may eventually become restricted for many more. How many will still have equal access to justice? Alredy, we have restrictions in that wealth can increase one’s odds of obtaining the justice he seeks, and lack of it places restrictions on us in varying degrees. Also, intelligence and knowledge can help a person obtain justice. Obviously, a lawyer can represent himself better than a lay person. And an intelligent person will fare better than one with lesser intelligence. Also, common sense plays a role, as does mental health. A very intelligent obsessive schizophrenic will never be as satisfied or able to move on when the game is over as a psychologically healthier person. All those factors make for an imperfect world. Law libraries help “level the playing field,” but a level field is hard to keep in a tilted world.

The wholesale denial of access to justice by our own government will place all of us at greater risk. Will our loss of individual liberties occur to the extent of a fascist regime? Maybe, when we incorporate whole ethnic groups and religions into those who lose their legal rights. Will this country go so far as to develop its own reign of terror, as in the French Revolution? Probably not, since the wealthy oligarchy still maintain power over our corporate entities, even with the loss of a few high profile CEO’s lately. But we ought not take refuge in the fact that we believe we can avoid the irony of earlier repressive states, wherein the victors eventually became the vanquished.

Those of us who have never felt the weight of oppression, who have been fortunate not to have faced racism or religious bigotry, we still have something to lose, and that is our basic humanity. The definition of *humanity* I am using here is “the quality of being humane; benevolence; kindness; mercy.” The essential quality I fear losing is the ability to treat other human beings with respect and concern, even if we don’t know them. When we begin to allow some people

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to be judged as less than others, to allow the denial of their basic legal rights, we will soon turn to spending our time deciding who the people we meet are, our time judging others ourselves. I do not think that a society wherein we all have to focus on class and group and not on others as individuals is a society which can have such wonderful people as firemen who run into a burning building to save people they don’t know. Or people who would serve on charities to see that others more unfortunate can get the basic necessities. Or people who could answer legal reference questions for anyone, regardless of who the patron is.

As a middle-age white Anglo-Saxon Protestant male with several college degrees, relative mental health, a good job, and a rather decent knowledge of how the justice system works, I feel I have little to fear that our current government will suppress my own legal rights. I know I am lucky in that respect. But my chosen vocation has been to see that others have access to the literature of the law and some ability to comprehend it so that they, whoever they are, can exercise their legal rights. My chosen profession provides value to me well beyond the dollars they pay me—it provides meaning to my life. It is a core element to my own basic humanity. I am sure that our profession provides much the same to you as well. I would not appreciate losing that.

Judicial opinions are written and published, and legislation is published, so that all people can have access to the law. Implied in that publication, and crucial to our democracy, is that both individuals and society as a whole can judge the worth of those opinions and laws. Many bad decisions have been overturned in time, as society becomes more humane. It is part of our growth as a culture and a democracy. A secret hearing is really no hearing at all, for there is no posterity to it, no accountability. The value of our law libraries is not only the opinions that are still precedent, but also the mistakes, the overturned precedent, that let us see how we have learned through the years and grown as a society.

It is in this sense that I fear that bin Laden could win. The United States is very mighty. I doubt that it can be defeated from without, but from within our own fear might defeat us. Democracy is a fragile thing that must be protected from within. Yes, I am scared of terrorism. I fear for myself and for people I love across this country. And for people I don’t know. It is that fear and concern for those I don’t know that I don’t want to lose. I want my humanity to remain intact.

So I think I know why I am so tired. My day is spent trying to stop bad legislation that would cost our library much-needed funding. My day is spent trying to convince corporate sponsors and law firms to keep their contribution levels to our fund raiser high in spite of a bad economy. My day is spent pinching pennies and trying to find good staff. All these are tasks meant to help keep the law library free and available for all. I now realize that I see the law library as a bastion against my society’s loss of humanity. It’s a heavy load. Each thing carries so much more meaning. The law library has always been valuable, but this last year has made it ever so much more important. It is the difference between democratic humanity and tyrannical inhumanity.

I feel better now. I feel more focused and less tired. Thanks for sharing my reflective moment with me.
Creating Connections in Orlando:  
My First AALL Convention

Janet Zigadlo  
Connecticut Judicial Branch, Law Library at Litchfield

This year I had the honor to receive a SCCLL grant to attend the AALL conference in Orlando. Even though I had been to one other library conference before, I wasn't sure what to expect from this one. I found the AALL conference to be very well organized and focused. I attended various programs, partied at many social events, got active in business meetings and learned new technologies at vendors’ exhibits. I found the entire experience to be energizing, inspiring, educational and fun. The following is a description of some of the more memorable events for me.

I started the conference on Saturday, July 20th with CONELL, the Conference of Newer Law Librarians. The morning consisted of a series of informational and breakout sessions designed to educate attendees on how to conference and to motivate participants for further involvement in AALL. Two sessions I remember

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Outstanding Programs  
First Time Attendee’s Favorite Presentation

Susan Szymula  
A. Max Brewer Memorial Law Library, Viera, FL

As a first-time attendee at an AALL Annual Meeting, I was overwhelmed by the selection of programs! There was so much to learn that I found myself running (sometimes literally) from program to program! I tried to attend as many as I could and purchased audiocassettes from programs I really liked or missed due to conflicts.

There was one program I was determined I would not miss. Jan Jasper, a New York management consultant, author and Office Efficiency Spokesperson for IKON Office Solutions, presented Take Back Your Time: How to Regain Control of Work, Information and Technology.

In her novel approach to working smarter, Jan offered lots of tips to her large audience. She debunked what she called the Myths of Time management, including:

- “You must have a clean desk”

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well were From Rookie to Veteran and Marketplace. In From Rookie to Veteran, Greg Lambert from the Oklahoma Supreme Court shared his tips and advice on job success. Advice such as always remembering the professional you are (staying above gossip, etc.) and being proud of what you do (tooting your own horn, etc.) served as good inspirational reminders for me. Kumar Percy from the University of Texas talked about volunteering for AALL. Julie Bozzell from Greenberg Traurig of Miami and Erika Wayne from Stanford Law School gave a lively presentation on how to conference. They shared some very practical ideas such as taking a buddy with you to tour the exhibit hall if you feel intimidated if lack of purchasing power (or any other reason), using the back of your badge to store business cards and tickets to the various activities and using eyedrops to keep your eyes wide open after a night of partying! During Marketplace, participants got a chance to meet representatives from AALL committees, special interest sections and local chapters. Some of the SIS’s I visited included State Court and County Law Libraries, Legal Information Services to the Public and Foreign, Comparative and International Law. Here I got basic information about the groups as well as information on how I can become more involved. Another activity worth mentioning was our tour of the Orlando Museum of Art. Here, I discovered the interesting modern paintings of Frank Moore. Moore combined images from his farm and other areas in New York State with modern technology and medicine to convey powerful social commentary. If you are interested in art and aren’t familiar with his work, his art is worth a look.

On Sunday, I attended A Crack in the First Rung on the Ladder of Justice - Can a Model County Law Library Code Reinforce Our Legal Information Gateways? Anne Grande of Hennepin County Law Library introduced the program by discussing the purposes of the meeting and educating participants on the background of the Model Trial Court/County Law Library Code project. The main purpose of the program was to solicit feedback on the final draft of the Model County Law Library Code before it goes to people outside the profession such as judges, etc. The main reason for the project was to provide some suggested guidelines, written by librarians, as a resource for legislatures that may be changing the statutes regarding their law library systems. Anne cited other reasons for having a model code including the focus it can provide to find our role with the increased number of pro se litigants and increased use of technology. Mike Miller of the Maryland State Law Library elaborated on the project’s general background with statistics gathered by the first working group. To me, some of the statistics were very surprising. Of the responses received from the first working group's survey, only 46% of the libraries were staffed by at least one degreeed librarian! 58% of respondents consider funding to be adequate to maintain the collection! This was greatly influenced by the answers of non-librarians participating in the questionnaire. 68% have no relationship with the local public library. (Guilty as charged.) Most of these statistics pointed to the need for some model code and the need to focus on a broader view of our libraries from outside of the profession. Maureen Well continued the discussion with the structure and history of the Connecticut Law Library system, which started as a county system over 100 years ago and, through various changes, is now a part of the Connecticut Judicial Branch of government. Karen Westwood of the Minnesota State Law Library talked about the set-up of her library system and how implementation of some aspects of the code has influenced her libraries. While I don't remember much feedback from audience members during the program, Mike Miller's handouts had some email feedback on the draft. Some applaud the pro-active effort. Others feel that creating boards and tying libraries to state offices can be too restrictive. Personally, my opinion falls in between the two. I think the code has the flexibility to have participants adopt some measures while leaving others depending on their needs and existing factors. But mostly the program impressed on me a larger view of how the nations’ law libraries exist. It made me realize how well organized we are, a fact verified to me by my librarian friends outside the law field.

My favorite plenary session was Generations at Work given by Ron Zemke of Performance Research Associates. At first, I wasn't sure I would like this program. I have been taught to be wary of categorizing people too quickly or too broadly. But Zemke used fun, entertaining visuals and anecdotes to describe the characteristics, motivations and interrelations of the different generations in the workplace. Zemke talked about the Veterans, born between 1922 and 1943, who value conformity, respect for authority and delayed reward. He described the Baby Boomers, born between 1943 and 1960, who are geared to personal gratification, personal involvement and consensus in decision making. The details of Generation X were the most familiar to me (probably because I am one.) Some of these details I found true for myself. Being a former latch-key kid, I relate to being independent except when it comes to learning things on my own. Give me a class anytime! I was very interested to hear about the Nexters, born after 1980, because I know the
least about this group and because I may end up working with (or supervising) them for a good majority of my career. Nexters are group oriented in their thinking and decision making. They like to have detailed instructions for accomplishing tasks. I'll never forget what Zemke said about the Nexters: "They may look like they're dangerous, but they're not! They visit danger but they don't stay there." Zemke suggested that this may come from the over-protected environment they grew up in. (Think of all the padding we made them wear while they were out roller skating!) This image really struck me. I thought about all of the times I had some strange looking kids approach me at the public library reference desk. After working with them for just a few minutes, I found out that they were the nicest people I'd ever met!

On Wednesday, I attended Here Comes the Judge: Evaluating Online Services. The program presenter was T.R. Halvorson, a Deputy County Attorney in Montana. I was very impressed with this program! T.R. had a clear and direct way of presenting the material, which was useful and practical. T.R. discussed two processes: evaluation, especially to the standards of our profession without "dumbing down" to management, and communication. For evaluation, T.R. recommended using the SCOUG rating scale because it is already considered a "classic" in its twelve-year history. The SCOUG Rating Scale has the following ten categories of criteria:

1. Coverage and scope (Which courts are covered? How deep are the back files of historical data?)
2. Timeliness (How frequently are the files updated?)
3. Accuracy/error rate/authenticity (What is the source of the data?)
4. Accessibility/ ease of use (What are the hours of operation and availability?)
5. Consistency (Is navigation the same throughout the system?)
6. Integration (Does the system offer hyperlinking ability?)
7. Output (Are keywords highlighted in context?)
8. Documentation (Are search operations documented?)
9. Customer support and training (Is customer support staffed adequately?)
10. Value-to-cost ratio (What pricing options are available?).

As for communication, the memorandum to management should be concise. The writer must limit the summary to one page and stay within tolerable cognitive load levels. Management wants to read answers and conclusions, not information and facts. The writer should condense the categories of the SCOUG rating scale to no more than seven categories. After T.R.’s presentation, we broke out into smaller working groups where we used the SCOUG rating scale to evaluate FastCase, a new online research system. I liked the fact that we had this opportunity to do hands on work.

I can’t conclude my article without mentioning some of the fun I had at the convention. I didn’t have too much time to visit Disney but I promised myself I would at least visit the World Showcase at Epcot Center. I accomplished my goal, which was to visit the Moroccan section and eat at their restaurant. I was also impressed with the other countries’ displays. I thoroughly enjoyed the opening reception at SeaWorld and the West SCCLL reception on Tuesday night where a few law librarians tried to convince me to go to law school. (Sorry gang! Don’t think I’m ready for that one yet!) Being a lover of simple pleasures, I’ll never forget the Peabody ducks! Every day around 11:00 am the red carpet is rolled out through the lobby, people gather and the Peabody ducks are marched to music straight to the fountain from their penthouse. Those ducks are faster than you’d think!

If you hesitated to go to an AALL convention in the past like me, don’t wait anymore! The inspiration, education and fun it provides are well worth it. My goal is to be a regular attendee. Thank you for this opportunity.
Per Jan, it’s more important to have a good system for getting your work done than it is to have a clean desk. She suggests creating “Action Files” for projects you are working on. Suggested topics for Action Folders include: Phone Calls to Return, Staff Meeting Notes, and Budget. As added security, put important deadlines in your planner.

- “Handle each piece of paper only once”

Handling each piece of paper only once won’t work if you toss it in a file, or in the trash, just to get rid of it! Jan says you should take action on it each time you handle it, such as calling for information you need, or drafting a response.

- “I Have to Keep That”

Jan asked “What good is it to keep it if you can’t find it?” She provided a list of questions to ask yourself in deciding what to keep and what to toss. Some of those questions are:

- Do I still need this piece of paper or file?
- Is the information up-to-date?
- Do I have the same information somewhere else?
- Am I legally required to keep it?
- What’s the worst that could happen if I threw it away?

- “File alphabetically”

It’s better to file by category or purpose to keep related items together.

For more information on Jan Jasper’s theories on time management, you can read her book *Take Back Your Time: How to Regain Control of Work, Information & Technology* and visit her website at [www.janjasper.com](http://www.janjasper.com).