

LISP NEWSLETTER

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From the Chair

Greetings to all LISP-ers! As many of you know, LISP and the Social Responsibility Special Interest Section submitted an application to file an amicus brief in a Florida prison law library case, Henderson v. Crosby. I am sad to report that application was rejected. To read the history of this application and why LISP chose to get involved, check out the LISP website at <http://www.aallnet.org/sis/lisp/amicusbrief.html>.

We were not the only group seeking to submit an amicus who were denied. Other interested parties who asked for leave to file amici briefs and were turned down include the Florida Public Interest Law Section of the Florida Bar and the Florida Institutional Legal Services. We thank all who supported this effort, including the members and board of both LISP and the SR-SIS. **Alison Alifano** and **Ann Hemmons**, chair and vice chair of the SR-SIS respectively, were both instrumental in finding funding and lobbying for support of this effort. Thanks also to **Michael Kaye**, who wrote the brief, **Bob Oakley**, who helped edit it, and to AALL President **Janis Johnston**, who approved the submission of the brief.

We are not giving up, though. If the case Henderson v. Crosby case makes it to the Florida Supreme Court, we will consider petitioning again for leave to submit an amicus on behalf of the prisoners.

On the positive side, the decision to pursue this project has brought to light the fact that our organization (AALL) can respond and become involved in cases that affect the right of access to legal materials. We as an organization have a lot of knowledge and experience to contribute to the discussion of these rights in the courts and it is important that we pursue all avenues of advocacy. Special Interest Sections can help by being on the lookout for various cases that may be good candidates for filing an amicus brief. As a professional organization, we need to make sure that opportunities to advocate our ideals are not missed.

For example, in the pivotal federal case regarding prisoners' access to materials, Lewis v. Casey, 518 U.S. 343, *not one* library organization filed an amicus brief supporting adequate prison law libraries. We cannot let this happen again.

To promote the filing of amici briefs in the future, I have proposed an amicus curiae policy to the AALL Executive Board which will be on the spring meeting agenda. This policy outlines a procedure for requesting AALL approval for filing an amicus brief and gives specific time deadlines. I hope this policy will be adopted and used to promote AALL's interests in keeping legal information accessible.

Other things I would like to accomplish this year (or at least get a good start on) include: (1) having more programs across the nation that teach either regular public librarians or the public how to find and use legal resources; (2) have a LISP member from each state write a model suggested collection development list for public libraries in their state; and (3) working with the Social Responsibility Special Interest Section to create a model policy for dealing with prison mail and prisoners. For more details on these objectives, go to <http://www.aallnet.org/sis/lisp/objectives2004.html>

I hope that we can accomplish these goals in the 2003-2004 year and I look forward to receiving your comments.

Sincerely,

Amy

Amy Hale-Janeke, Chair
LISP Special Interest Section

From the Editor

Happy holidays and happy new year!

Debby Norwood
Editor

AALL/LEXISNEXIS CALL FOR PAPERS COMPETITION

Have you been thinking of writing an article of interest to law librarians? Maybe you just need a push to get started? Whether for fame or for fortune, this is your chance to enter the AALL/LexisNexis™ Call for Papers Competition.

The AALL/LexisNexis Call for Papers Committee is soliciting articles in three categories:

- Open Division for AALL members and law librarians with five or more years of professional experience
- New Members Division for recent graduates and AALL members who have been in the profession for less than five years.

- Student Division for budding law librarians still in school. (Students need not be members of AALL)

The winner in each division receives \$750 generously donated by LexisNexis, plus the opportunity to present his or her paper at a special program during the AALL Annual Meeting in Boston. Winners papers will also be considered for publication in the Association's prestigious *Law Library Journal*.

For more information, a list of previous winners and an application, visit the AALL website at http://www.aallnet.org/about/award_call_for_papers.asp. **Submissions must be postmarked by March 1.**

If you have any questions, please contact any member of the AALL/LexisNexis Call for Papers Committee, Kathryn Hensiak, k-hensiak@law.northwestern.edu or Virginia Davis, Davis@UH.edu

The AALL Mentor Project Wants You!

The AALL Mentor Project:

- Provides an informal, personal source of information for newer members
- Provides an avenue by which experienced law librarians may meet promising new members of the profession
- Provides a network for members who are contemplating a move to another type of library

Who should participate?

- All experienced law librarians willing to share their time and wisdom
- All enthusiastic newer members
- AALL members considering a move to another type of library

2003 mentees benefit from guidance and support:

- ***While I have yet to meet a law librarian who wasn't willing to offer advice when asked, it is great to have someone who specifically wants to be asked. My mentor was also great fun to be around at the conference. She has continued to help me since, providing local introductions when I moved to San Francisco. – Monica Donovan, Information Specialist, Jackson Lewis LLP.***
- *My experience with my mentor has been great. We are both in similar situations and I know that I can always turn to her for advice and encouragement. – Sarah Mauldin, Director of Library Services, Lionel Sawyer & Collins*

2003 mentors recommend the experience:

- *Working as a mentor provides an opportunity for reflection and analysis about what's going on in law libraries and it makes you appreciate how much you have learned in your own career path. It's not rocket science and there's no right or wrong way to make it work. Even if your only time together is at the annual meeting, you have nothing to lose by trying it but, potentially, a lot to gain. – Suzanne Thorpe, Associate Director for Faculty, Research, and Instructional Services, University of Minnesota Law Library*
- *I have been a mentor at the last two AALL conferences, and it was a great experience. In addition to sharing my knowledge and experience with others, I believe that I can always learn something new by listening to my colleagues, regardless of their level of experience. I find it refreshing to hear how other libraries approach common issues. Moreover, frequently we come to law librarianship after many years in other professions. Often these new librarian colleagues have experience and knowledge of their own that enriches me. Finally, I enjoy teaching and helping (that is, after all, why I do what I do for a living!), want to give back to the profession what I can, and never pass up the opportunity to network. – Barbara Traub, Head of Reference Services, Rittenberg Law Library, St. John's University School of Law*
- *For the past two years, I have had wonderful mentees who are interested in foreign, comparative and international law librarianship. As many times a newer FCIL librarian is the only subject specialist at his or her workplace, a mentor and professional connections are vital. – Stephanie Burke, Senior Reference and International Law Librarian, Pappas Law Library, Boston University School of Law*

How can you join the Mentor Project?

To learn more about the AALL Mentor Project and to become a mentor or mentee, visit our website at: http://www.aallnet.org/committee/mentoring/mentor_project.html

Mentors and mentees will be matched as closely as possible based on submitted applications.

Volunteer in South Africa!

2004 Inform the World Library Skills Exchange

The ITW Library Skills Exchange is a 4-week hands-on volunteer program primarily for Library Science students and professionals (some non-librarians also accepted). The goal of the program is to provide structured training and assistance to South African librarians, library committees and teachers with little or no formal librarian training. The program is called a "skills exchange" because African and international librarians bring their expertise together to create unique answers to the information needs of rural African communities. Sometimes the solutions are based on international standards, like using a recognized method for classifying books. Other times, they are unique adaptations to local conditions, like delivering books by donkey cart or making paper from elephant dung. Most often, each volunteer and African librarian contributes to creating a library as special as the community it serves.

There are two groups who will visit different locations: Limpopo: July 12 - August 12 and KwaZulu Natal (KZN): July 16 - August 17.

For more information, please see <http://worldlibraries.org/itw/itwoverview.shtml> or contact Laura Wendell, Executive Director, The World Library Partnership, 3101 Guess Rd. Suite D, Durham, NC 27705, 919-479-0163 or Donna Nixon, World Libraries Volunteer 2001, and Executive Board Member, Reference/Access Services Librarian & Clinical Assistant Professor of Law, Kathrine R. Everett Law Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 100 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC, (919) 843-7890, dnixon@email.unc.edu.