



Vol. 17, Spring - Fall 2008 Issue

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David Brian Holt, Newsletter Editor

Message from the Chair

SR-SIS Members,

I am thrilled to be addressing you for the second year in a row as chair of the Social Responsibilities SIS. It is such a pleasure to be serving in this capacity. Thanks again to all of you for this opportunity.

As always we have a lot of exciting happenings to report as you'll read in this newsletter. But first, I'd like to give you the "skinny" on the various SR meetings being planned for Portland in July 2008. The feedback we received from members indicated that the timing of the SR-SIS Business Meeting in New Orleans was not ideal. So, we've altered the schedule slightly to maximize attendance at the business meeting. The schedule will be as follows:

Sunday, 7/13	12:00-1:15 p.m.	SR-SIS Standing Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues Business Meeting
Sunday, 7/13	5:30-6:30 p.m.	SR-SIS Business Meeting
Sunday, 7/13	8:00-11:00 p.m.	SR-SIS Standing Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues Reception
Monday, 7/14	7:45-8:45 a.m.	SR-SIS Standing Committee on Library Services to Institution Residents Business Meeting
Monday, 7/14	12:00-1:15 p.m.	LISP-SIS/SR-SIS/SCCLL-SIS Joint Roundtable on Pro Se Patrons and Prisoners

I am thrilled to announce that the Annual Meeting Program Committee has chosen three of the eight programs proposed by our SIS for presentation at the 2008 AALL Annual Meeting in Portland. The programs chosen are:

1. Animal Law: An Emerging Area of Practice and Clinical Legal Education - proposed by Ann Hemmens of the University of Washington Gallagher Law Library. This program focuses on two leading organizations impacting legal education and practicing attorneys. The National Center for Animal Law (Lewis & Clark Law School) is focused on developing law school

curricula, student competitions, and a legal clinic focused on animal law. The Animal Legal Defense Fund is focused on improving enforcement of anti-cruelty laws and assisting in the handling of animal cruelty cases. Both organizations will be discussed, and the impact of their work on law libraries will be explored.

2. The Fourth E - The Environment and Law Libraries - proposed by Elizabeth Outler of the Lawton Chiles Legal Information Center at University of Florida and co-sponsored by the Southeastern Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries (SEAALL). This program focuses on planning, building, or renovating a green library or making your existing library more green. Topics such as the reduction of energy use and energy loss, waste reduction, adopting greener practices, green building design, and implementation will all be discussed.

3. Oregon's Death with Dignity Act: A Legal History - proposed by Etheldra Scoggin and co-sponsored by the Legal History and Rare Books SIS. Program co-coordinators include Stacy Etheredge of the Coleman Karesh Law Library at the University of South Carolina and Laura Ray of the Cleveland Marshall College of Law Library. This program focuses on Oregon's unique and highly controversial statute making it the first and only state to legalize physician assisted suicide in 1994. The act has survived numerous legislative and judicial challenges and therefore has a fascinating and extensive legislative history. This history, the ensuing lawsuits, attempts to repeal, federal challenges and various other aspects will be discussed in this program.

Please join me in congratulating these program proposers.

Let me also stress that the SR-SIS had 5 other program proposals that were not chosen by the Annual Meeting Program Committee, and all of the members who put time and effort into drafting and refining these excellent proposals should also be congratulated. So, thank you to Meg Butler of New York Law School's Mendik Law Library, Mark Plotkin of the University of Miami Law Library, Scott Burgh of the City of Chicago Department of Law Library, and Stacy Etheredge of the Coleman Karesh Law Library at the University of South Carolina. Your participation and enthusiasm help to make our SIS great. Because of the level of participation in program proposing by our members, we have consistently presented high quality, exciting, educational, and often controversial programming at the AALL annual meeting. Our programs ALWAYS get a buzz going, and this only happens because we have the best, coolest, smartest, most rockin' members in the association.

I'm look forward to the best meeting ever in Portland, and I hope you are too.

I hope you enjoy this issue. Thank you, thank you, thank you to Prano Amjadi without whom this newsletter would not have happened. Also, thanks to Leslie Campbell and Jorge Juarez for their contributions.

Ron Wheeler, Chair

Associate Director for Public Services

Georgia State University College of Law Library

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2007 SR-SIS SC on Lesbian and Gay Issues Annual Business Meeting

The Standing Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues held its annual business meeting in New Orleans on July 15, 2007. The group discussed the successful publication of the Sexual Orientation and the Law bibliography, and a publicity committee was formed, headed by Ron Wheeler. A report from the Committee on the Name Change was presented by Jeff Berns,

committee chair. The group debated the issue of changing the name of the standing committee, and it was decided that discussion of the issue would continue on the SR-SIS listserv. For a detailed discussion about the name change, read Jeff Berns' article below.

Jorge Juarez is currently scouting out locations for next summer's Standing Committee reception. If anyone familiar with Portland has recommendations for sites for the reception, please contact him (jjuarez@lclark.edu). Jorge is working on it but has not yet found the perfect space.

Thanks,
Jorge Juarez
Chair, SC on Lesbian and Gay Issues

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SR-SIS 2007 Standing Committee Business Meeting Minutes

Below are the minutes from the Standing Committee Business Meeting held in New Orleans. I'd like to direct your attention to the section titled "Report of the Committee on the Name Change," which details the discussion over the proposed name change for the Standing Committee. Jeff Berns presented the committee's report with recommendations (this report that was emailed to SR-SIS members prior to the meeting). It was decided that the discussion would continue on the listserv, so that members who weren't able to attend the meeting could provide feedback and/or suggestions. I propose that the discussion continue on the listserv during the month of October. In early November, I will set up an online survey to gauge the direction we'd like to take. Without further ado:

Standing Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues
2007 Business Meeting Minutes

Social Responsibilities Special Interest Section
Sunday July 15, 2007
New Orleans

Approval of Minutes

Courtney called the meeting to order, and the minutes were passed with spelling corrections. Secretary/Treasurer's Report was given at the SR Business Meeting.

Introductions

We went around the room, and everyone introduced themselves.

Holoch Grant Report

Jim Gernert was this year's recipient. After the grant was paid, a balance of \$11,842.89 remained. Ron Wheeler thanked those who have donated to the fund.

Programs in New Orleans

Kurzban on Immigration, thanks to Mark Plotkin

Diversity Standard Under Fire, thanks to Larry Reeves and Fred Barnhardt

Program Ideas for Portland

Meeting to be held 9am Tuesday morning at La Croissant at the Hilton.

Sexual Orientation and the Law Bibliography

James Donovan, Editor-in-Chief, reported that the bibliography had been published on time. James delivered the Standing Committee's copy of the bibliography, which will be kept by Ron Wheeler. James noted the need for marketing of the bibliography outside of the legal market, as Hein does not market outside of law libraries. Updates to the bibliography are ongoing, coordinated by James Durham and Stephanie Wilson (www.lgbtbib.org).

Report of the Committee on the Name Change

Jeff Berns, committee chair, presented the report to the body of the Standing Committee, with recommendations. The committee proposed two alternatives to the current Standing Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues. Those alternatives are:

Standing Committee on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues

Standing Committee on Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Issues

A discussion followed, the main points of which are summarized below:

We could leave the name as it is, and address the diversity issues in our mission statement.

We could leave the name as it is, and have a tag line indicating inclusion of bisexual and transgendered individuals: Open to all concerned. Several felt strongly that we should do what is necessary to make everyone feel welcome; there were personal accounts of bisexuals who did not feel included because of the name. The point was also made that not every group in AALL is explicitly mentioned. Municipal librarians don't fit perfectly into AALL, but they come anyway. Current name has history, NAACP as example.

We are the only group that includes the message "open to everyone" alongside our meetings and reception in the schedule. Several strongly wanted to keep the words "Lgbt Gay" and "Lesbian" saying we lose something if we use the words "sexual orientation" instead. Courtney explained the online opinion poll, which she envisioned would include options of yes, no, and maybe. New chair Jorge Juarez will work with Jeff Berns and the name change committee to continue discussion of the issue on the listserv, then set up an online survey mechanism whereby all SR-SIS members can participate in making a decision regarding the standing committee's name.

New Business

Creation of Publicity Committee for the Sexual Orientation and the Law Bibliography, headed by Ron Wheeler.

Election of New Officers

James Durham, Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect

Adjourn

Take care,

Jorge Juarez, Chair on SC on Gay and Lesbian Issues

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Habitat for Humanity -- New Orleans

To say something "changed my life" sounds so trite, doesn't it? Maybe we say it too much.

Maybe it is just a tired cliché. But I found myself thinking just that at the end of a very hot and humid Friday in the sweltering New Orleans July heat on the way back from having participated in the Habitat For Humanity service project at the 2007 Annual Meeting. For me, and I think for the other hot, sweaty, dusty, tired volunteers who participated in the HABITAT FOR HUMANITY service project, it was an intense and rewarding experience we will not soon forget.

I was particularly proud that the SR had done so much and been so instrumental in getting these and the other 2 service projects (Second Harvest with Ann Hemmens and The Louisiana State Museum with Amy Hale Janeke.) Special thanks to Ron Wheeler who did all the organizing and communicating with Habitat in New Orleans to get the project organized.

Over 40 of us gathered in the early July 13 morning in front of the convention center awaiting the bus that would take us to the Musicians Village, a project intended to encourage musicians to return to a community in the upper 9th ward. I was nervous. Though the project description said “no experience whatsoever required” and “all instruction would be given onsite”, I was pretty sure that couldn’t possibly compensate for my utter lack of practical house building skills.

The tone of the day was set by our driver, a New Orleans native, who was charming, funny, and welcoming (in that way it seems all New Orleans natives are). Most striking though, was his obvious passion in telling us about Katrina and how New Orleans was fighting back. Between the convention center and the job site, he described everything along the route in terms of Katrina’s impact on him, his friends and family and the New Orleans community. He was heartening and funny and heartbreaking and sobering, all at once. A perfect reminder why we were there.

My strongest impression all day was one of sheer awe at the organizational, teaching and communication skills of the HABITAT staff and volunteers. Imagine going into your library each morning to face somewhere between 1 and 100 strangers, many of whom have never been in a library, who you must organize, train, and inspire if you hope to get anything done. (Of course, luckily for (most) libraries, this would not have to included an overview of power tools, the danger of heat stroke, and a quick mention of tetanus shots!)

On this day there were 40 neophyte librarians, a Baptist high school group from Texas, and several other individuals and groups who’d been on the jobsite for a while. (Quite the mix.) The HABITAT crew took this merry band and organized us, formed us into teams, prevented any of us from getting hurt or suffering heatstroke or making any really bonehead mistakes, and did so quickly, efficiently, in 90 degree swelter, with humor and good grace. (And then they get to repeat the same process the next day and every day with who knows how many 6 new and different volunteers!) Truly management skills to envy.

It almost goes without saying that the HABITAT staff are dedicated at a level it is hard to express in words. Just one example – one fellow we worked with had quit his job, moved to New Orleans and worked for HABITAT without pay for several months before being put on staff. He had had no prior experience in construction. He worked like a fiend, seemed to be having the time of his life, and ran a mean forklift!

The library volunteers worked on multiple jobs – some painted interiors and several of us unloaded pre-built sections of framed walls off several flat bed trucks. (One trailer been left at

the wrong address so we all piled into a truck, drove to the trailer, unloaded the frames from the trailer to the truck and drove it back). One banged forehead (Lee Ryan, are your pupils the same size yet?), one smashed hand (Sara Sonnet's concert piano career ruined), and one truckload of wall framing later, we had accomplished a drop in the bucket but it felt good.

The most hilarious moment for came when we realized that instead of simply cleaning up the work-debris on the site (a task they told us to do whenever we were awaiting our next assignment and to which we took with an alarming gusto!) we found our librarian-selves actually categorizing, classifying and organizing the debris according to size, material, and purpose. ("It's what we do; it's who we be.")

The best job all day was working on installation of the flooring system of a new home. The young HABITAT Crew member explained to 30 or more of us how the flooring system worked, the engineering standards and requirements behind its design, and how we would be deployed in to teams each working on a different part of the process. It was an amazingly quick orientation to a complex "ballet" of hammers and joists. (Of course all the time we were just thinking "Cool, we get to hammer!") Habitat homes are engineered and built with such attention to the latest innovative and strict standards, that they have found they withstand storms well in excess of expectation. (And of course those HABITAT volunteers put in such loving care and so many, many, many nails, these houses are built to last!)

Working together in extremely close quarters built camaraderie. And not just little envy towards that one rangy kid who got the BIG carpenter's hammer and used it like a pro! It was near the end of a long day, but we were fired up to keep going; the crew had to keep reminding people to take their "water breaks"!

When it was time to leave we turned in our hammers, tool belts and nails with a little sadness. We were lucky enough to be picked up by the same driver who took us on a "side-trip" to the more devastated areas of the Lower 9th. Instant perspective. We had left that jobsite feeling accomplishment and pride in our hard work. It was instantly humbling to see how much more needed to be done and ought to have been done already.

It was a day like no other. We learned a lot about each other and ourselves. Dear friends revealed their hidden love of power tools! I learned about trying something completely new. New friendships were formed and there were people who's names I'll never know but whose faces I hope I don't forget.

SR-SIS is supporting organizing similar projects in Portland in 08. If service projects are offered again, my recommendation (yes, another major cliché) is "Just do it." I know if there is any way I can be, I'll be there.

Leslie Campbell

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Standing Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues Debates a Name Change

In May of 2007, the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Name Change of Standing Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues issued its report on the Standing Committee's name. The Subcommittee had been formed at the 2006 meeting of the Standing Committee to study the possibility of changing the name and mission statement of the Standing Committee to be more specifically inclusive and to issue recommendations. After reviewing the history of the

Standing Committee and its name, and studying the names of sibling groups in other professional associations, the Subcommittee recommended in its report changing the name of the Standing Committee to the Standing Committee on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues. It also recommended broadening the mission statement to include bisexuals, transgendered individuals, and others supportive of the rights and interests of sexual orientation and gender identity minorities. Additionally the Subcommittee recommended that, prior to putting a formal proposal before the Standing Committee and the SIS for a vote, a poll be taken of the membership to elicit further views and wider commentary. The report also recommended, should action be postponed to incorporate wider revisions in any bylaw amendments, that the Standing Committee adopt a resolution at its 2007 annual meeting affirming that the Standing Committee is open to all, not only lesbians and gay men as the current name might imply. A copy of the report may be found at <http://www.aallnet.org/sis/srsis/lgbt/committee-namechange08.pdf>.

The report was presented at the Standing Committee business meeting on July 15, 2007, in New Orleans, La. Meeting attendees decided that the discussion would continue on the listserv so that members who weren't able to attend the meeting could provide feedback and/or suggestions and that an online poll of the membership be conducted. That poll was circulated to the members by listserv on January 12, 2008 by Standing Committee Chair Jorge Juarez. (If you missed the e-mail, please visit the SR-SIS listserv archive at <http://share.aallnet.org/read/login/>. Note: The archive is password protected.) The purpose of this survey is to determine whether the Standing Committee's name should change, stay the same, or stay the same with the addition of a descriptive tag. The poll closes at the end of February 2008.

Jeff Berns, Librarian, Spiegel & McDiarmid LLP, Chair of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Name Change

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