
SR-SIS Newsletter, vol. 9, no. 2

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A Capital Contribution : Law Librarians Serving the District

by Karen Westwood

"This library was completely dismantled for three years and is now being rebuilt. It is still a work in progress, with lots more to do (e.g. catalog cards for shelf list, labelling books, signs, etc.) but because I'm required to teach the full master schedule, I have very little time left to work on completing the library and have no help. The students want to borrow books, but can't until the books are properly cataloged and processed. Therefore, I definitely can use any volunteer help I can get both in service and materials to bring the library up to full operational status."

-Librarian, Adams Elementary School, Washington, D.C.

We have selected the Adams Elementary School library as the primary beneficiary of "A Capital Contribution" in Washington, D.C. this summer. Teams of volunteers will go out to the school (and other schools, if we have enough volunteers) on Wednesday, July 21. There will be two shifts - one leaving the Convention Center after the first morning session ends at 10:00 and returning by 12:30, and the second one leaving the Convention Center around 12:30 and returning in time for the General Business Meeting at 3:00. You may sign up in advance by e-mailing Karen Westwood, SR-SIS Chair at karen.westwood@courts.state.mn.us or you may sign up at the SR-SIS table in the exhibit hall in Washington, D.C. The Social Responsibilities SIS is proud to sponsor this event for AALL and we hope that as many of you as possible will join us on the 21st!!

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Book Donations

Carol Billings has graciously agreed to coordinate a book collection for the D.C. Public schools. At the Social Responsibilities SIS table in the Exhibit Hall Activities Area members will be collecting new books appropriate for kindergarten through sixth grade children. All AALL members are encouraged to purchase one or more books to bring along in their suitcases so the project volunteers can deliver them on Wednesday, July 21, when they visit the Adams Elementary School. Anyone needing suggestions for books to buy should e-mail Social Responsibilities member Carol Billings at cbilling@lasc.org for information.

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Benefits of Volunteering

by Carol Billings

The following reply for Carol that she sent to Karen Westwood in regard to the Capital Contribution. She has graciously allowed us to publish it here in the newsletter.

When ALA held its Midwinter Meeting in New Orleans in January 1998, a special volunteer effort was carried out for the first time as an initiative of President Barbara Ford. Many members of the Louisiana Library Association were involved in organizing the project, and because I happened to be state president at the time, I ended up as a co-chair. Our project involved transporting about 200 librarians from all over the country to a number of New Orleans and suburban schools and public library branches to do story hours and Internet training. Lunches and t-shirts were provided by a vendor for the volunteers as were the buses. Because it was the maiden attempt at such an effort there were a few glitches, mainly communications problems with the schools, but generally everyone involved felt that it was worthwhile project.

School librarians were very involved in making it all work. New Orleans Mayor Morial gave the volunteers a spirited send-off with a wonderful speech emphasizing the importance of supporting libraries.

So what are the benefits of carrying out such a volunteer project?

1. The effort really does benefit the community--in ALA's case the school children and public library user. Because volunteerism and charity are such important American values, it is important for our profession to set the example.
2. It's a good bonding experience for our members to do good things together. They make new friends with common interests.
3. It's good for our profession to be seen by the community doing things for people. That attracts good, caring people to our profession, and signals that libraries and the justice system are valuable things.
4. Such an experience develops loyalty to our association by our members because it

gives them an opportunity to do worthwhile things for the community.

5. Personal satisfaction from contributing to such projects makes us understand the value of helping other people. Many of us regularly volunteer for other charities, churches, synagogues, etc., and I think all of us who do, feel that the work we do, the recourses we contribute, etc. are among the most worthwhile things we do.

Last fall a group of churches that I volunteer with (usually providing lunches for the homeless) carried out a new project where we collected and purchased school supplies for kids in innercity New Orleans public schools. A bunch of us did all the buying and sorting, and when the little kids came to pick up their supplies and school bags, they were so thrilled. It was a great feeling to watch them, and I know we'll do the project again next year.

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From the Chair

Greetings fellow Social Responsibilities SIS members!

This newsletter is chock full of interesting items, so grab yourself a cuppa whatever you drink (coffee, chai, Diet Coke?) and settle down for some good reading.

First, you'll notice the ballot. Bruce Klenschmidt has done yeoman's duty trying to find someone willing to chair the SIS. Our Standing Committees on Gay and Lesbian Issues and Service to Institution Residents form a critical component of the SIS, but you don't have to be on either Standing Committee to chair the SIS. As a chair who's been trying to initiate a new opportunity for the AALL Annual Meeting this year, I can tell you that the other folks in this SIS are a pleasure to work with, and always willing to give feedback and offer to help. In John Davey, next year's Chair, we have a person with a desire to broaden the vision of the SIS and heighten our profile within AALL - now's your chance to get in on the action! Please carefully read the candidate bios, give our newly elected Chair all the support you can, and consider running for office in the next SIS election!

Second, here's an update on the Volunteer Opportunity I wrote about in the last newsletter. This is taking shape nicely, keeping in mind that this first year is something of a trial balloon. I have been in contact with our colleagues in LLSDC and they've put me in touch with the Director of Media Services for the DC Public Schools. She is very excited about the possibility of having law librarians come to the schools and help with various projects from computer trouble-shooting to processing books to storytimes. If we can compliment our labor with a gift of money (I'll be asking for a vote on that at our Business Meeting in DC) I'm sure our efforts will be sincerely appreciated by our school librarian colleagues. As soon as I know the date for this event (we're calling it "A Capital Contribution: Law Librarians Serving the District") I'll post it to the AS-SIS listserv. AALL will also issue a press release on it.

Why do a volunteer effort, I've been asked? Aren't people busy enough at the Annual Meeting? I'm excited about this idea for a couple of reasons. One has to do with our

identity as librarians. I enjoy the Annual Meeting because it makes me feel connected with all law librarians. It gets me out of my everyday work niche, and gets me thinking about law librarianship in a larger context. In going to the DC schools, we'll be connecting with other library professionals. It's one way of making that circle bigger and of paying respect to our colleagues who are doing important work in preparing the children who may some day be our clients. The other reason is more self-serving in terms of the SIS. When Jim Heller proposed this idea, I felt strongly that the SR-SIS was the group to pick up the ball. I certainly believe that the SR-SIS needs to challenge the association and its members on issues, as it has done in the past. But I also feel that part of a Social Responsibilities agenda is finding common ground. This opportunity seemed like a wonderful chance to do that. By working together with members from other SIS's and other types of libraries, perhaps we can build on the respect we already have for one another. Then, the next time the SR-SIS challenges AALL policy, or raises a ruckus, maybe folks will see us as more than just a group of rabble-rousers (or special interests, or fill in your favorite term!). I've asked Carole Billings to articulate why she feels strongly about this effort (you'll see this same information in an upcoming issue of Spectrum.) Her comments appear elsewhere in this newsletter.

Finally, Rebecca Alexander has tackled the job of updating the SR-SIS website. Please take a look at it at www.aallnet.org/sis/srsis. Rebecca has eliminated the bad links, put more recent newsletter information on, and updated the SIS officer information. If you have suggestions for additional links, or questions about the website, please direct them to Rebecca at zzalex@washburn.edu. Once we have particulars "A Capital Contribution", they will appear on our website as well. Deep thanks go to Rebecca for undertaking this job!!!

That's all for now. As always, I'd love to hear from you (positive or negative). See you in DC!!

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Minnesota State Law Library
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St. Paul, MN 55155
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Diversity in AALL?

Members of the Social Responsibility SIS are invited to join the AALL Diversity Committee and other interested members at the 4th Annual Diversity Symposium in Washington, DC. This year's topic, "Cross-Cultural Communication", will be facilitated by DeEtta Jones, Senior Program Officer for Diversity for the American Research Libraries (ARL). The Symposium is scheduled for Saturday, July 17th, from 2:30-5:00pm, with the Committee on Diversity Cocktail Reception following immediately thereafter.

In both Diversity Committee meetings last year in Anaheim and the Fall 1998 issue of the *LawLibrary Journal*, the question of just how we as an organization and we as society define "diversity" was seriously debated. Is it enough to simply make sure that all voices from divergent viewpoints, however defined, are heard? Does the inclusion of white gay and lesbian people as a "sexual minority" within a body such as the Diversity Committee dilute its prior focus on addressing the needs of people of color within AALL?

When different groups face different obstacles within the profession, how can we best respond without diminishing one group's needs to expand opportunity for another? These are just some of the themes that may be addressed, either within the symposium itself or in informal discussions at the reception.

In her presentation at the Symposium, DeEtta Jones will present fundamental, "culture-general" theories of communication between people. Among concepts to be discussed are: defining "diversity", examining cultural assumptions, factors that intensify cultural misunderstandings, identity building, and ally building. Each of these concepts plays a role in determining how we as individuals and as AALL identify and address questions of diversity, inclusion, and even discrimination within our own organization. Ample time has been reserved for audience participation in this year's Symposium, and we need as many members as possible present to help address this critical issue.

Last year's symposium on Affirmative Action was interesting, challenging, and perhaps the best event I attended in Anaheim. All who were there seemed to find the presentations and discussion helpful as we navigate what some want to make a "post-Affirmative Action" world.

However, given the magnitude of the issue, attendance at the symposium was still rather light. Please take the time now to look at your schedules, plan to be in Washington the 17th, and join us at the Diversity Symposium and Reception this year. Both events are free, but we ask that you please pre-register on your AALL conference form.

You may register late by calling Pam Reisinger at AALL Headquarters at 312-939-4764, ext. 23 until June 18.

Thanks, and I hope to see many of you at the Symposium on the 17th.

Sarah Gregory, member SR-SIS and
Subcommittee of Lesbian & Gay Concerns;
AALL Diversity Committee member, 1998-2000
sgregory@lclark.edu

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Annual Meeting Programs to Address Millennium Issues

by Timothy Coggins

Chair, Annual Meeting Program Selection Committee
and Hazel Johnson
Member, Annual Meeting Advisory Task Force

Reflecting the theme, "At the Crossroads: Information Management, Technology, and Policy, the programs at the 1999 Annual Meeting will confront the issues facing law librarians as the 21st Century approaches. We are at an important crossroads. We must position ourselves not only to survive but also to thrive in the technology based world that continues to evolve around us. Within each of the five tracks at the Annual Meeting, - Management; Technology; Information Access & Policy; Foreign, Comparative & International; and Technical Services -there is a plethora of programming designed to help law librarians address important millennium issues.

The Technology track includes exciting ideas and dynamic speakers. It's All in the Books, Right?: The Ethical Perils of Ignoring Electronic Legal Resources in the Information Age features Judge Robert E. Payne (E.D. Va.) who wrote one of the first opinions acknowledging that attorneys have a duty to stay "abreast of developments in the law" and that there are numerous resources, including online services, serving this purpose. Encryption at the Crossroads features Marc Rotenberg, compiler of The Privacy Law Sourcebook, Director of the Electronic Privacy Information Center and one of the organizers of the grassroots campaign against Lotus Marketplace. The program will feature a discussion of POP, the current industry standard for email encryption, and current and proposed legislation regulating the use and export of strong encryption products. The proliferation of electronic products, the HYperlaw decision and the burgeoning number of legal documents found on the Internet has escalated the need for a uniform citation system. The principal drafters of MLL's new Universal Citation Guide will "state their case" for adoption of the guide during the program, AALL's Universal Citation Guide on Trial. A panel of judges representing various segments of the legal system will cross-examine the drafters about the potential problems and impact of such a system on the way judges, lawyers, scholars and others work.

Among the Information Access & Policy track programs, Unauthorized Practice of Law 1999 will feature representatives from Nolo Press, which is currently under investigation by a subcommittee of the Supreme Court of Texas for producing materials which assist individuals to do their own legal work. The preservation of the digital records created by federal agencies is one of the greatest challenges of the upcoming millennium. Lawyers, scholars, judges, reporters all should have an interest in how the federal government and the National Archives and Records Administration plans to meet this challenge. Federal Information Policy and Agency Recordkeeping at the Crossroads will feature Scott Armstrong, a noted author and journalist, and Dr. Lewis Belardo of NARA debating the issue. The consolidation in the legal publishing industry affects law librarians every day. The two-part program, Meeting of the Minds at the Crossroads of Legal Information, offers a panel of law book publishers participating in a roundtable discussion on the state of legal publishing today. Part Two will feature a panel of law librarians reacting to the points made by the publishers.

The Technical Services and Foreign, Comparative & International tracks feature

programs of value to everyone, not just the librarians who specialize in those two fields. Crosswalks to Information Management: Metadata focuses on one of the cutting edge issues of searching the Internet. What is metadata? How can it make storage and retrieval of information more accurate? How will it affect search engines? The emergence of electronic publications has caused librarians to rethink the definition of a serial. The program Loose-leads at the Crossroads: Redefining Seriality will focus on the ongoing discussions of proposals to re-define seriality and the impact that may have on cataloging and processing traditional materials and their new electronic counterparts. The globalization of the world's economy makes the quest for the law of other countries a daily challenge. From Russia With Law, Cuban Legal and Political System and Our Neighbors to the North and South will provide insights in understanding and researching the law of some of the most important of the U.S.'s many trading partners.

A facet of a law firm librarian's life is laboring on research projects and wondering how much of that time will actually make it to a client's bill. The program, Getting the Client to Value Legal Research, in the Management track will offer a number of suggestions about ways to present librarian research time and tools to be used in the client-retention process. The ubiquitousness of technology in today's law libraries often requires that technology professionals be employed in the law library. Ensuring that all employees understand each other's work and that upper level management (and library staff) understand the need for well-compensated technology staff is the focus of How to Hire the Right Computer People -and Keep Them From Crossing the Road.

This is just a sampling of the more than 70 programs scheduled for the 1999 Annual Meeting. Want to know more? Watch for "Crossroads Spotlights" postings on the dcedprog and law-lib listservs.

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Vice Chair/Chair Elect Candidate Biography

Ellen Platt

AALL Experience:

Program Coordinator, Social Responsibilities Education Program, "*Hiring Practices in Religious Organizations*," July, 1994 Secretary/Treasurer, Academic Law Libraries SIS, 1997-1998 Member, MLL Research Committee, 1999-2001 Chair, ALL-SIS Membership Committee, 1998-1999 Member, MULL Public Relations Committee, 1997-1998

Local Chapter Experience

NOCALL, Northern California:

Member, Audit and Budget Committee, 1998-1999

LLAW, Wisconsin:

President, 1997-1998 (partial year due to job change)

Vice President/Program Co-Chair, 1996-1997

Program Committee Co-Chair, 1995-1996

Public Relations Committee Chair, 1993-1995

Employment History:

Current position, Director of Public Services, Santa Clara University, Heafey Law Library, since October 1997.

Previously Head of Reference and Reference Librarian at Marquette University Law Library, October 1992 to October 1997.

Education:

BS History, University of Oregon, 1983;

JD, University of Oregon, 1991;

ML, certificate in Law Librarianship, University of Washington, 1992.

Candidate's Statement

To the members of the SR SIS:

When I was asked to run for VC/C-Elect (in fulfillment of a promise to run made two years ago) I assumed I would have a 50/50 chance of actually being the successful candidate. Then I heard that despite Bruce's tireless search and countless phone calls, only I was willing to place my name in the ring for this election. Now I know that everyone's busy and many of you have contributed your time and energy to this SIS for far longer than I have belonged (two years), but it seems to be a sad commentary about people's willingness to continue to support the SIS.

This malaise is certainly not unique to this SIS; other, much larger SISs are also undergoing similar crisis of character and direction (stay tuned for the release of the membership analysis of the ALL-SIS, which shows little or no participation in leadership or committee activities there either).

So the questions before us, which will be the focus of my term as chair are: who are we, where are we, and where do we want to go? Should we continue to work on the same two primary issues (equal rights and prisoners rights), or do we need to find a new focus or issue to explore? One that might reinvigorate the SIS, unite the two distinct member groups and attract new members.

I pose these questions not to criticize, irritate or confront you, but instead to get everyone thinking about the present state of the SIS and what direction it could or should take, or if it's already headed somewhere, to restate that direction and reaffirm this momentum. I look forward to serving the SIS and I hope that you will join me.

Ellen Platt

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Volunteers Needed

Believe it or not, it is not too early to start thinking of program ideas for next years conference.

The theme for next year, "Gateways to Leadership" has already been announced. We will have a brainstorming session at the annual meeting to discuss program ideas. But

it is better to start now.

Many members have been successful in coordinating programs. If you have an idea, but are not sure how to formalize it contact Karen Westwood or John Davey, they will get you in touch with someone who has experience. The new Vice Chair/Chair Elect will serve as the Chair of the Education Committee for this next conference.

Also we would like to get together a list of people how are willing to work next year on SIS activities. People interested in helping out should also contact Karen or John. We are not talking about a very large commitment of time, most business is done in consultation over email.

We would like to see new faces.

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Representative Barney Frank To Attend Standing Committee Reception

by Laura Whitbeck

Openly gay Representative Barney Frank (D-MA) will be among the attendees at the Standing Committee on Lesbian Gay Issues Reception an Tuesday, July 20th.

Please feel free to invite your friends and colleagues to this reception as we get reacquainted with old friends and make new ones.

The reception will be held In the beautiful and historic Woman's National Democratic Club, centrally located in DC's gay neighborhood just one block norm of Dupont Circle. This 1892 mansion is on the National Register of Historic Places and houses numerous antiques and political memorabilia, including the desk on which Frances Perkins signed the fust M~nunum Wage Act. Additionally, Eleanor Roosevelt gave her weekly radio addresses from the library on the second floor.

The Standing Committee will have full use of the first two floors of the house, including the library, the music room (complete with baby grand piano), and an outdoor garden for smoking. The house is barrier free, has an elevator, is one short block from Dupont Circle Metro.

Look for an RSVP form in the near future.

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Help Wanted

No. This isn't the job postings. This is, once again, a plea for your help.

Would you like to contribute some content to our newsletter? I know there are several wonderful writers within this SIS, would you consider a column? What about a one time article? Perhaps a letter to the editor.....

The next issue of this newsletter will be out in June, with an article deadline of June 4th. Please consider writing something for this up-coming issue.

I would like to have regular news updates from the two standing committees, and a letters to the editor section.

I hope to hear from you.

Prano Amjadi
(408)554-5320
pamjadi@scu.edu

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A New Webmaster

The SR-SIS is happy to announce that we have a new webmaster onboard. Rebecca Alexander at Washburn School of Law had taken over the task of updating our web page. Check it out.

<http://www.aallnet.org/sis/srsis>

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In the news...

At the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia, a group of 15 librarians rallied in front of the Marriot hotel in support of Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is on death row in Pennsylvania for the 1981 murder of a police officer. His case, and possible innocence were the topic at an Intellectual Freedom Discussion Group session sponsored by the Alternatives in Print Task Force of the Social Responsibilities Round Table.

Reported in American Libraries, March 1, 1999

*Comments to: [Rebecca Alexander](#)
Last updated 28 October 1999*