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New Realities, New Roles: Reinventing Law Librarianship

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Reinventing Law Librarianship

How would you like to hear about:

- fund raising
- larger/shrinking libraries
- training attorneys
- salary increases
- archives/manuscripts
- IT staff
- death of the reference desk
- forward thinkers
- faculty services
- federal documents

and more — all in one place? You can at the AALL Annual Meeting. Be at the Minneapolis Convention Center, July 14–19, or you will miss out!

Flashback: It was February 2000 and the AALL Annual Meeting Program Committee was meeting with then Vice President/President-Elect Bob Oakley — now president — in Chicago. The goal was to set the theme and program tracks for the 2001 Annual Meeting. Most of you have probably been to some sort of session like this. The flipcharts, colored markers, tape and post-its — compliments of the Annual Meeting Program Committee Chair Kathie Sullivan — were all ready and waiting to be put to good use.

The brainstorming began. One word kept popping up: Reinventing. The AMPC members kept shuffling it around and around but were reluctant to let go of it. Should reinventing be the overall theme of the meeting? Had it been used too much? Was it a cliché? What time do we break for lunch? (Wait, that was something else) What else should go with it? Law libraries? No, we need to get at the *people* in some way. And we need to address the needs of people who are well established in their careers and looking for new ways to challenge themselves, as well as those who are newer to the field. Law librarianship? What does *that* mean? Is it too traditional? Maybe, but it had real meaning for each of us, too. You get the picture. But we all kept coming back to “Reinventing Law Librarianship.” We all felt attached to the phrase, though we were a diverse group of people from different types of settings and with different specialties. In the end, “Reinventing Law Librarianship” became a program track. Or in the current vocabulary of your AALL *Preliminary Program*, a “subject area.”

We didn’t check the dictionary at the time, but the definition of “reinvent” in my dictionary is exactly what we were aiming for: 1. To make as if for the first time something already invented, 2. To remake or redo completely, 3. To bring into use again; reestablish. Perfect!

Flash forward to the present: There are 14 programs for Minneapolis with the “Reinventing Law Librarianship” subject area listed under them. The program topics are all over the map, as you can see from the list above. But they do have a similar thread running through them: They all illustrate ways in which we have reinvented ourselves or they encourage us to reinvent ourselves. And they are all very interesting topics with knowledgeable speakers who will challenge you to look for ways to reinvent yourself and your profession. We are called upon to reinvent ourselves on a regular basis, but it is not easy. Come and be inspired!

Programs Sunday, July 15

“Facing a New Reality: The Law Librarian as Fund-Raiser”

Fund raising is a newer concept for nonprofit libraries, but this program aims to help “conquer the fear of asking for money.” Regina Smith of the Jenkins Law Library and Robert Brink of the Social Law Library will describe their fund-raising experiences and share their expertise and advice.

“David In, Goliath Out? Do We Need Larger Libraries to Accommodate More Books?” vs. “The Incredible Shrinking Library”

Well, which is it? Are libraries growing or are they shrinking? The answer is both, depending upon your type of library.

“David In, Goliath Out?” is targeted at academics. Penny Hazelton of the University of Washington, Roger Jacobs of the University of Notre Dame, Blair Kauffman of Yale University, and Gordon Russell of St. Thomas University will all address the provocative question: Do you need a bigger library when everything is on the computer? Or is it? Come and find out!

In “The Incredible Shrinking Library,” Beth Langton of Buckingham Doolittle &

Burroughs and Kate Kennedy of Squire Sanders & Dempsey will help you answer the question that keeps popping up in law firms: Do we need all those books? Downsizing the physical space devoted to a firm library without jeopardizing research will be discussed.

“Reinventing Your Library”

Timothy Green of Ernst & Young, Center for Business Knowledge, will challenge librarians to “become more proactive in demonstrating their value-added role within the firm.” Libraries are not merely a collection of books and must become “closer to the core business operations of the firm.”

Monday, July 16

“Training Attorneys: How to Get Them to Attend Training Sessions and Come Back for More”

Margaret Fuller Corneille of the Minnesota State Board of Law Examiners and Rachel Jones of Dickstein Shapiro Morin & Oshinsky have discovered that refreshments alone will not provide enough of a draw anymore. But maybe mandatory continuing legal education credits will do the trick. Learn how to “add pizzazz to your training sessions.”

“Show Me the Money! Practical Tips for Negotiating a Salary Increase”

There was a very popular program on salaries in Philadelphia last year. Come to this one and find out how to “bring your salary into line with your expectations.” Roberta Shaffer of the University of Texas at Austin School of Library and Information Science and Sandra Yancey of Yancey Consulting Group will discuss how to arrive at a salary you can live with and then how to negotiate in order to get it.

Tuesday, July 17

“Legal Historical Materials in a Nutshell: An Introduction to Legal Archives and Manuscripts”

Mark Lambert of South Texas College of Law Library, Paul Finkelman of the University of Tulsa College of Law, and William Maher of the University of Illinois University Archives will help you to better understand these unique collections and how to make them accessible.

“Key Competencies for the Key Cogs in Your Value Network: Your IT Staff”

Lyonette Louis-Jacques of the University of Chicago and Mark Folmsbee of Washburn University will answer the burning questions: What are those core advanced computing competencies needed by information-technology staff? And how can they learn them if they don't have them already? Discover whether the different cultures represented by the library and information technology worlds are coming closer together.

“Facing Reality: The Death of the Reference Desk?”

The title says it all. Come hear Judy Meadows of the State Law Library of Montana, Christine Ryan of the Vermont Law School, and Susan Siebers of Katten Muchin Zavis discuss how the nature of reference has changed and their different views on the necessity — or not — of the reference desk.

“New Agency Roles in Ensuring the Life Cycle of Electronic Government

Information — Part II: Are the Federal Depository Library Program and NARA Meeting Public Interest Needs?”

This second part of a two-part program will focus on “the agencies that are viewed as trustees for permanent public access and preservation — the Government Printing Office’s Federal Depository Library Program and the National Archives and Records Administration.” Francis Buckley of GPO and Lewis Bellardo of NARA will discuss the status of their respective agencies and a member of the AALL Government Relations Committee will respond to each of their presentations.

Wednesday, July 18

“Law Librarianship Education for New Realities, New Roles”

This is a follow-up program to one on partnerships between law libraries and library schools at last year’s Annual Meeting. Robert Grover of Emporia State University School of Library and

Information Management, Joyce McCray Pearson of the University of Kansas Law Library, and Nancy Johnson of the Georgia State University Law Library will focus upon the new legal information program formed by the partnership between the University of Kansas School of Law and Emporia. Discover how this new Master of Legal Information Management degree will prepare future law librarians.

“New Realities: Forward Thinkers Will Point the Way”

This is a new “free-form” approach to a program that should prove to be quite interesting. Bob Berring of the University of California, Dick Boss of Information Systems Consultants, and Roberta Shaffer of the University of Texas at Austin School of Library and Information Science will “provide an inspiring close to the Annual Meeting and fire us up for the months ahead.” These visionary thinkers will address any topics that strike them as important in terms of planning and preparing staff for new roles.

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“Separate but Unequal No More: Integrating Federal Documents Collections”

Charlene Cain of Louisiana State University, Penny Hazelton of the University of Washington and Janet McKinney of Shook Hardy & Bacon will examine the pros and cons of merging government documents processing and reference service.

“Not Your Mother’s Law Professor: Re-Thinking Information Services for Academics”

Charles Ten Brink and Margaret Duczynski, both of the University of Chicago, and Mary Whisner of the University of Washington will discuss the changing teaching and research needs of law faculty and how these influence the services that law libraries design and deliver to their law faculty.

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