

LISP NEWSLETTER

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Message from the Chair

In recent months we have received resignations from LISP Newsletter Editor John Adkins (head of Public Services, University of San Diego School of Law/Legal Research Center) and LISP Webmaster Fred Hanson (Davis Wright Tremaine LLP in Seattle). Both of these members, through their individual and cooperative efforts, have provided LISP with a tangible presence and a means of communication.

John was editor for four years and during his tenure he took the newsletter to an online-only format. He also served as a member of AALL's Council of Newsletter Editors and is a member and Past President of San Diego Area Law Libraries (SANDALL).

While Fred has not been a member of LISP for several years, he has continued to give us the benefit of his technical back ground as a courtesy despite his involvement in other professional activities including a stint as WESTPAC treasurer, service on the AALLNET Advisory Committee, and his present participation on the lo9cal arrangements committee for the forthcoming Seattle meeting. As webmaster, Fred was instrumental in maintaining the website and getting the final product to our members.

Needless to say, both gentlemen have done superb jobs and deserve recognition and our sincere appreciation for the contributions and years of solid support to LISP. They will be missed. THANK YOU!

Randy Mafit
LISP Chair

From the Editor

One of the pleasures of volunteering is often the opportunity to recognize others who have given of their time and talents. In serving as vice-chair and chair for LISP, I've

been so fortunate to work for the past couple of years with John Adkins and Fred Hanson. John served as my predecessor as editor of the newsletter—in truth, writing much of the copy and getting the newsletter into publishable form. His willingness to work with me and his indefatigable sense of humor made my experience so much more enjoyable. As for Fred, he has labored on the LISP website to keep it up to date and user friendly. Without his efforts, our on-line newsletter would not exist. John and Fred were always willing to help me—even at the last minute—with getting information to our members.

So many thanks to both of you from a grateful LISPer! I hope that as the new editor of the newsletter that I can continue the great job that you both have done.

Debby Norwood
Editor

Nominations for the LISP Executive Board

Volunteer and enjoy the experience! It's never too early to be thinking about possible candidates for the LISP Executive Board, either yourself or someone who you think will do a terrific job. You get to work with a great bunch of law librarians, dedicated to ensuring that the public has access to legal information services. There's so much to do especially in this climate of restricted budgets.

LISP Offers Legal Research Booklet for Non-Lawyers

The Legal Information Services to the Public Special Interest Section (LISP-SIS) of the American Association of Law Libraries has recently released a revised edition of its booklet entitled "How to Research a Legal Problem: A Guide for Non-Lawyers." The informative 12-page booklet is designed as a giveaway guide to help non-lawyers find legal rules that can resolve or prevent conflict. Avoiding jargon throughout, the booklet covers the basic steps in legal research. It also describes basic sources of legal information, giving examples of legal encyclopedias, treatises, articles, codes, reporters, and digests.

Information on how to order the booklet online is on the AALL website at http://www.aallnet.org/prodcuts/pub_how_to.asp. One complimentary copy is available upon request. The price has increased due to the increased cost of printing and is \$1.00/each for multiple copies. Please fill the quantity needed and click the "order" button to proceed to the Secure Checkout page. The contents of the booklet itself are posted on the LISP website at http://www.aallnet.org/products/pub_how_to.asp.

Thanks to Angus Nesbit (University of Oregon) and Lee Warthen (University of Utah) for shepherding this project to completion.

2003 AALL Annual Meeting – Mark Your Calendars!

The following LISP events have been tentatively scheduled:

LISP Executive Board Meeting (By Invitation) OFFSITE
Saturday, July 12, 2003 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.

LISP Business Meeting (place to be announced)
Sunday, July 13, 2003 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

LISP Program Accepted for the 2003 Annual Meeting in Seattle

Title: Law Made Public: Teaching Basic Legal Research to Pro Pers, Paralegals, New Associates and all others In-Between

This program is coordinated by Amy Hale Janecke (San Diego County Law Library)—

The information age has forced law librarians to shift into new roles as teachers, instructors, and guides. Many times law librarians find themselves trying to teach pro pers on an ad hoc basis, one at a time, while still handling the reference desk duties. This is inefficient and frustrating for the librarian and pro pers. This program demonstrates how to get started in giving regular monthly classes in basic and advanced forms of legal research to the public both inside and outside the law library. Creation, marketing, and tips for success and pitfalls to avoid will also be covered.

The program will be on Monday morning at 9 a.m. Hope everyone can come!

2004 AALL Annual Meeting

It's not too early to be thinking about programs for the 2004 AALL annual meeting, to be held in Boston, Mass. Deadlines for program proposals for the next annual meeting are usually just a couple weeks after the closing banquet for the current year. The sooner you put that thinking cap on the better!

If you're interested in planning a program—or just want to think about it—here are some helpful hints:

1. Email LISP Chair Randy Mafit randy.mafit@co.lane.or.us or call him (541.682.4113) and let him know that you are interested in developing a program proposal. You may also want to contact vice-chair/chair elect Amy Hale Janecke <email: ahale@sdcll.org or voice: 619.685.6552>.
2. Review the AALL Program Planner's Handbook, available at http://www.aallnet.org/events/am_03/03_handbook.asp.
3. Review the AALL Program and Workshop Proposal Forms at http://www.aallnet.org/events/am_03/03_handbook.asp.

4. Attend the LISP Executive Committee meeting in Seattle scheduled for Saturday, July 12, 2003, from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. You're invited to bring your ideas and a draft proposal.

Feature Article:

E-Newsletters for Public Law Libraries Are Cost-Effective and Easy

Amy Hale Janecke
Reference Librarian and Media Coordinator
San Diego County Public Law Library

When I took the job of reference librarian at the San Diego County Public Law Library, I didn't know that I'd also end up being the Media Coordinator too. However, my bachelor's degree in business communication helped me identify several things the library could be doing better to promote itself and its services. One of the biggest changes I suggested was switching from a paper newsletter to an electronic newsletter. We converted over in September and the response has been great! To see a sample, visit <http://www.sdcll.org/newsletter/e-Newsletter.html#archives>.

With an e-newsletter we get these advantages:

- more people see our product
- we save about \$2600 a year (no more printing and postage costs)
- we can send out a monthly newsletter instead of a quarterly one, allowing us to keep our users abreast of our latest acquisitions, changes in the law or new Internet links

In the past, we sent out a quarterly newsletter to all of our members. The mailing cost \$800 per issue to print, then about \$600 per issue to mail out. Our annual costs were about \$5,600 per year. When we added in all the staff time involved in laying out the newsletter, the cost of producing and distributing a print newsletter was close to \$2,000 for each quarterly issue. We sent the newsletter to publicize our new acquisitions and services to our busy patrons, most of who simply threw the newsletter in the trash or put it in their "to read when I have a spare moment" bin. As we all know, the bin is always full and only gets emptied when we throw things away.

Additionally, many of our users were not getting the newsletter at all. Due to costs constraints, we sent only one copy of the newsletter to a member firm, regardless of the number of individual members of the firm. We hoped that the one issue would be routed amongst the members. You can imagine that by the time the last person received the newsletter, if they got it at all, the information was out dated.

With an email newsletter, on the other hand, we would be able to send the information at the same time directly to all registered holders of library cards. The odds of at least a few of them reading the information, versus only one, would be vastly improved and would help burnish our image as a law library in tune with the electronic age.

Thus, back in May 2002, I suggested that we start looking at e-newsletters. At the time, I was preparing the p.r. budget for the coming year and looking at the costs for producing and distributing our paper newsletter. I did some research into the costs of various e-newsletter providers and worked with our Information Services department to find out what would work with our system. I chose Subscribermail because I was impressed with their customer service support, the ease of use, and the ability to do what I needed; our Information Services department confirmed that it would work with our computer system.

The cost for the e-newsletter included \$1500 for the initial set up fee and \$250 per month, at the non-profit rate, to use the templates to produce it and then email the newsletter to about 2000 members. Our contract is month-to-month. The heading and layout were designed by professional graphic designers from Subscribermail.

The monthly \$250 fee allows us to send up to 10,000 emails per month. If we want to send more emails, we pay a higher fee. This is the most basic package and gives us a lot of room to grow since we currently only send out about 2000 emails in a month. As part of the package, Subscribermail also provided the code that allows casual visitors to our webpage to sign up to receive the newsletter. The program permits different categories of subscribers—we use “attorney” and “non-attorney”—and to send the information to only one group if we choose.

Other e-newsletter services required a long term commitment. In addition, we would pay a separate fee to archive the newsletters on our page when the contract was terminated. With Subscribermail, there is no long term commitment and we can archive the e-newsletter on our homepage without paying a fee.

The program is very easy to use. I can drop in Word documents, do a bit of formatting, throw in a graphic or two and then bake at 350 for an hour (ha ha) and get a nice e-newsletter in about an eighth of the time it took me to prepare a traditional print newsletter.

I usually print out several hard copies of the newsletter and leave them at the circulation desk for those without email or for those who prefer to read their newsletters in hard copy. However, we no longer mail hard copies.

In short, the e-newsletter has proven to be cost-effective for us and well liked by our users. Here are some of the responses that I’ve received about the e-newsletter:

Outstanding and informative newsletter.

I just read your newsletter online and want to let you know how impressed I was with it. It is brief, but quite informative.

Thanks for sending the newsletter—I love it. It’s interesting and I’m sure very useful to recipients.

Thank you very much for the email. I look forward to the next one!

Thank you very much for the heads up on the changes in the civil code.

If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me at ahale@sdcll.org. For more information about Subscribermail, visit their website at <http://www.subscribermail.com> or call Robert Ropars at 630.778.2600 Ext. 400.

2002 LISP Annual Report

[Although the LISP Annual Report was submitted, it was not included in the Fall 2002 issue of the Law Library Journal. It is included here in its entirety.]

The mission of our special section, Legal Information Services to the Public, is to improve access to legal information and to promote legal information services to the public. Two projects that we regularly engage in are the clearinghouse bibliography and the reference brochure. The SIS also publishes the public librarian's tool kit.

In addition to these projects, LISP promotes and encourages its members to provide research assistance to pro bono groups, either through local AALL chapters or individually by its members. LISP also is charged with representing its members' interests and concerns within AALL.

LISP published a revised and updated brochure, "How to Research a Legal Problem: a Guide for Non-Lawyers." Lee Warthen and Angus Nesbit served as co-editors. LISP also is reviewing its "Public Librarians Toolkit" for purposes of updating it. Beth Schneider continues to maintain the Clearinghouse of documents, submitted by other law librarians that assist the public in researching the law. LISP published three issues of its electronic newsletter, edited by John Adkins. Fred Hansen served as the LISP webmaster.

LISP also sponsored a program at the 2002 Annual Meeting, entitled "Creating Connections with Our Future: Legal Information Services for Young Adults." The program was coordinated by Beth Schneider and Connie Von Der Heide served as moderator.

LISP was represented by Marcie Bierlein at the roundtable of the Council of Chapter Presidents. LISP encouraged chapters to establish a committee to promote and provide information about legal information to the public, as outlined in the AALL Strategic Plan, Direction no. 2D(3).

LISP officers elected for 2002/03 are: Amy Hale Janecke, Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect, and Martha Renick, Secretary/Treasurer. Randy Mafit is the Chair of the LISP SIS for 2002/03.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Norwood
Chair, Legal Information Services to the Public SIS

July 2002

Minutes
Annual Business Meeting
Legal Information Services to the Public Special Interest Section
held during the
American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting
Orlando, July 21, 2002

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m. by Chair Debby Norwood. Other officers in attendance: 2001-02 Secretary/Treasurer Connie Von Der Heide. All in attendance signed a sheet, indicating institutional affiliation and email address. (See list at end of minutes.)

Approval of Minutes

David McFadden moved, Angus Nesbit seconded to approve minutes of the July 17, 2001 Business meeting as published in the LISP newsletter. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

The May 31, 2002 Revenue and Expenses statement from AALL indicated a balance of \$6,406.09.

Report on LISP program held during this annual meeting

Connie Von Der Heide and Beth Schneider co-coordinated this year's LISP-sponsored program (C-4), "Creating Connections with our Future: Legal Information Services to Young Adults." Three speakers presented information on the SCALL Los Angeles Inner City Youth Internship Program; the Lubbock, TX Teen Court program, and serving young adult legal information seekers at the Orange County (FL) Law Library, which is housed in the Orlando Public Library. Approximately 30 people attended and the response seemed very positive.

Proposals for programs to be held at the Seattle annual meeting in 2003 are due in to AALL by August 16. Ideas should be emailed to incoming Chair Randy Mafit.

Committee Reports

Clearinghouse Committee, by Beth Schneider

Beth has finished compiling the new bibliography and reorganizing the collection. Sample copies of the bibliography are at the LISP activities table in the exhibit hall, with instructions to leave a card there to have a copy sent to you. Beth will write articles for the LISP newsletter and AALL Spectrum.

Reference Brochure, by Debby Norwood and Angus Nesbit

The revision has been completed, and copies are being distributed at this meeting and were available on the LISP activities table. PDF and text files will be available on the LISP web site. The text file can be updated in between revisions of the print version.

Education Committee, by Angus Nesbit

Randy Mafit and Lee Warthen want to get state coordinators in place to work on the Public Library Toolkit (<http://www.aallnet.org/sis/lisp/toolkit.htm>). They will be contacting LISP members.

Membership Committee

No report.

AALL strategic plan (chapter initiatives)

The plan includes a provision for establishing chapter liaisons to LISP. Debby also encouraged members to share information on the LISP listserv.

Direction for LISP SIS in 2002-2003

Looking for ways to get more people involved. Ideas that were shared include:

- Use the web site to broadcast member ideas.
- Focus more on working with the local chapters.
- Beth will mail to each chapter a copy of the LISP Research brochure, the Clearinghouse bibliography, and introductory information about LISP. She'll also mention the chapter initiative items in the AALL strategic plan.
- Establish a grant to support development of workshops or programs that reach out to the public. In return, the developers would contribute copies of their handouts, program materials and marketing pieces to the LISP Clearinghouse.
- Offer grant(s) to attend non-AALL conference.
- Offer a grant to attend one day of the AALL annual meeting, with attendance at the LISP Business meeting required.
- Get more discussion going on the LISP listserv.

New Business

2002-2003 LISP Board Members

Chair: Randy Mafit, Lane County Law Library, Eugene, OR

Vice Chair-Chair Elect: Amy Hale Janeke, San Diego County Public Law Library, San Diego, CA

Past Chair: Debby Norwood, Jacob Burns Law Library, George Washington University Law School, Washington, DC

Secretary-Treasurer: Martha Renick, Marion County Law Library, Salem, OR

And the LISP web manager is Fred Hanson, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, Seattle, WA.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned by consensus at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Von Der Heide
2001-2002 Secretary/Treasurer

Attendees, 2002 LISP Annual Business Meeting, Orlando

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