



Connecting...



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American Association of Law libraries

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Message From the Chair

Kristina L. Niedringhaus

As 2006 comes to a close, AALL in New Orleans still seems quite far away. However, planning is well underway, and CS-SIS will be represented with some wonderful programs. **Jim Milles** has organized a workshop for Saturday, July 14, 2007 titled "How (and What) to Podcast." Anyone familiar with Jim's podcast **Check This Out!** will appreciate his expertise on podcasting. **Debbie Ginsberg** will be presenting two programs on Tuesday, July 17, 2007 - "The E-Book Report: Using Electronic Books in Your Law Library" and "Step Away from the Podium! Tips, Tricks and Technologies for Energizing Training Sessions."



In addition to our Business meeting and annual Breakfast speaker we will again be hosting two roundtables and two CS-SIS sponsored programs. On Monday, July 16, 2007, **Debbie Ginsberg** will host a hands-on session we're calling "CS-SIS Playtime" that will highlight some of the technology she will discuss in her "Step Away from the Podium" program. Also on Monday, July 16, 2007, **June Liebert**

and I will host a CS-SIS Hot Topic session about Web 2.0 and its impact on law libraries. The slate of programs, both from CS-SIS and others, planned for New Orleans is impressive and I encourage you to plan to attend.

This is the time of year when most of us tend to reflect back on the previous year. My year has been filled with building a new library, moving the law school (and therefore the library and IT!) and an ABA site visit for provisional accreditation. There have certainly been times that have been challenging or stressful but it has been a year filled with professional rejuvenation, excitement and creativity. I hope that 2007 brings each of you something new and exciting that reminds you why you chose this profession.



Kristina L. Niedringhaus is Associate Dean for Information Resources & Technology and Associate Professor of Law at Phoenix School of Law in Phoenix, Arizona.





On the Front Lines

The Value of Persistence

Ken Hirsh

Last week I found success in a project I had been working on for more than six months. I won't bother describing the substance of the project, but suffice it to say that I had been frustrated time and time again as I followed seemingly straightforward instructions, only to fail every time. When everything came together on Thursday, I was elated to find my first success. And I don't mean to ascribe that success merely to myself, for I had been reading advice from others who were familiar with the software and had taken the time to answer my questions. Without their help, I'd still be pulling out my hair.

While working on the project, I expressed to the project initiator that I had serious doubts about the likely prospects of my eventual success. However, I also promised to keep on trying. So for me, this experience turned into a lesson on the value of persistence. As Kenny Rogers wrote in "The Gambler," you have to know when to hold them and know when to fold them. In this case I learned the value of not folding too soon.

Most of us are familiar with Ranganathan's five laws of librarianship, having read them during the course of our education. The Five Laws of Librarianship, as published in his book by the same title, are

1. Books are for use.
2. Every reader his book.
3. Every book his reader.
4. Save the time of the reader.
5. The library is a growing organism.

Ranganathan's laws are so fundamental that they need no updating in the early 21st century. Regardless of the variety of our individual occupational titles, each one of us can apply those rules to serving our ultimate customers. Even where we do not literally work with books, the concepts set forth in those rules are nearly universal in the information service professions. I recommend we all take them to heart.



Ken Hirsh is Director of Computing Services and a Senior Lecturing Fellow at Duke University School of Law in Durham, North Carolina.





CS-SIS News

Congratulations to James Duggan

James E. Duggan has been elected AALL Vice President/President-Elect for the term July 2007—July 2008. James works tirelessly for the benefit of the association, and has contributed greatly to CS-SIS. James was chair of CS-SIS during 2001—02.

Congratulations, James. We wish you much success during your term as AALL President.

Thank you, CS-SIS

I want to express my thanks again for honoring me with the Ken S. Hirsh Distinguished Service Award. I am lucky to have so many friends in this organization and have enjoyed contributing to the SIS. I look forward to being a part of CS-SIS for many years to come.

Liz Glankler
Web & Technology Services Librarian
Saint Louis University Law Library



CS-SIS Webmaster Wiki

If you work on websites and have a good resource, tip, or trick to share, why not post what you've learned to the CS-SIS Webmaster Wiki? Visit <http://editthis.info/lawlibweb/Main Page>

and add any information you've found useful (or indispensable!). As the wiki grows, it will become an invaluable resource for those of us who create library or law school web sites.

Debbie Ginsburg
Electronic Resources Librarian
Chicago-Kent College of Law

The screenshot shows a web browser window with a wiki page titled "CSS Resources". The page has a navigation menu on the left with items like "Main Page", "Community portal", "Current events", "Recent changes", "Random page", "Help", and "Donations". The main content area lists several resources:

- CSS Resources**
 - CSS Heaven <http://www.cssheaven.com>
 - CSS Zen Garden <http://www.csszengarden.com/>
- CSS Editors**
 - TopStyle - highly recommended. This is a very powerful CSS editor that can also handle HTML, PHP, ASP, etc. All attributes are selectable from drop-down lists. Several browsers can be used in the preview window or an example/preview page is created on the fly. It flags attributes that are not supported in a selected environment. --EarlDaniels
- CSS Tools**
 - Web Developer (Firefox Extension) - Essential tool that adds a toolbar and menu item to Firefox containing various web development tool. One of the best features of this add-on is the ability to edit a web page's stylesheet in a sidebar while you are viewing the page. As you make changes in the sidebar, they automatically appear within the page as you type. Excellent for troubleshooting mysterious CSS bugs without having to edit-save-flip every tweak one at a time. (The changes are non-destructive, so you can easily revert back to the saved stylesheet simply by closing the side bar) --TomBoone





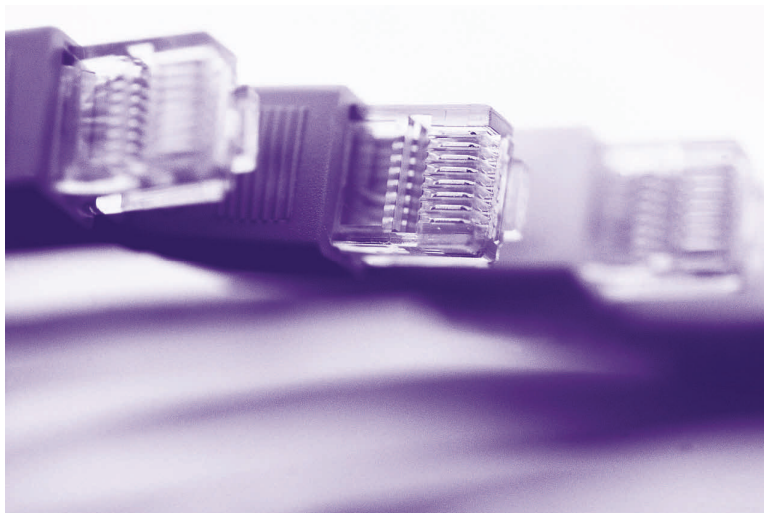
AALL Grants Available

The AALL Grants Committee invites qualified applicants to apply for AALL's Annual Meeting/Workshop Grants and the Minority Leadership Development Award. The AALL Grants Program provides financial assistance to law librarians or graduate students who hold promise of future involvement in AALL and the law library profession. Vendors, AALL, and AALL individual members provide the funds for grants.

The AALL Grants Program began in 1952 and is one of the oldest and most successful AALL programs. More than 1,000 librarians have received funding to assist them in attending AALL educational activities. Many of those recipients are leaders in the profession today. **Annual Meeting and Workshop Grants** are awarded to cover the Annual Meeting registration fee or the registration fee for workshops presented at the Annual Meeting. Preference is given to applicants who are new to the profession and are active in AALL or one of its chapters. For additional information, check out the application on the AALL Grant Committee's web site at http://www.aallnet.org/committee/grants/grant_application.asp.

In 2001, an additional Grants Program, the **Minority Leadership Development Award**, was created to ensure that AALL's leadership remains vital, relevant, and representative of the Association's diverse membership. The award provides up to \$1,500 toward the cost of attending the Annual Meeting, an experienced AALL leader to serve as the recipient's mentor, and an opportunity to serve on an AALL committee during the year following the monetary award. For additional information, check out the application on the Grant Committee's web site at http://www.aallnet.org/about/award_mlda.asp.

Application deadline: April 2, 2007.



*“Many AALL
grant
recipients are
leaders in the
profession
today.”*





First Time in Second Life

Robert W. Hudson

Second Life? Over 1.5 million cartoon avatars interacting in a virtual world has little to do with law libraries. But things are changing.

Currently, a few pioneering law school classes, such as Harvard's CyberOne, are conducted in Second Life.¹ Libraries are being created in Second Life; virtual patrons are asking real reference questions; and libraries are starting to respond to the opportunity. Incredibly, half a million dollars or so exchanges hands every day in this alternate, computing reality.² This is big and getting bigger.

Second Life is essentially a three-dimensional, on-line, virtual reality world.³ People create graphical characters called avatars and enter this virtual world to interact with others. Basic avatars are free, and at any given time ten thousand or more people may be logged on, including a good number from the Millennial generation. Celebrities such as Suzanne Vega give concerts in Second Life. People hold jobs and make money in Second Life. They also buy land and build in Second Life, including complexes such as "Info Island" where the first in-world (as opposed to real world) libraries are located.⁴ In-world libraries may look like classical columned edifices, or hover over land, or be topped with a grassy roof.

The educational potential and information needs of this community are expanding, as are the opportunities for information specialists. The generation now entering real world law schools participates in Second Life. In addition to casinos and concerts, non-profit educational campuses and libraries are developing in this virtual world as destinations where students learn and ask questions. Second Life libraries are staffed with real world librarians, providing an additional point of contact between information specialists and patrons. Students who might not ask questions in the real world library may ask them in Second Life.

Public librarians have led the way with in-world libraries housing special collections such as the Talis SciFi and Fantasy Galleries. Special in-world library exhibits and lecture series have been very successful. Workshops on topics such as how to research

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1. CyberOne page: <http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/cyberone/> (last visited November 27, 2006).

2. Incredulous? Check out BNA's report on tax issues in Second Life: Taxation of Transactions in Virtual Worlds May Prove Cumbersome, 7 BNA Computer Technology Report 17, p. 476 (2006).

3. Second Life URL: <http://secondlife.com/> (last visited November 27, 2006).

4. Info Island page: <http://www.infoisland.org/> (last visited November 27, 2006).

Robert W. Hudson is Reference & Instructional Services Librarian at Shepard Broad Law Library & Technology, Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida

“The educational potential and information needs of this community are expanding, as are the opportunities for information specialists.”



*First Time in Second Life (continued)*

genealogies are an example. In-world library collections include virtual books or in-world computer terminals with real-world links. Second Life libraries throw special events, like 'grand opening' of a new library wing. Academic librarians have followed these examples, and have opened special reading rooms for the Second Life in-world population. These usually take the form of a partnership with an existing library. For example, at Health Info Island a medical library is part of an effort to provide information services.

These efforts generate real interest in libraries. Demand for libraries in Second Life continues to grow, and many branch libraries have opened. Reference questions may be in-world questions such as how to teleport to a certain destination in Second Life, or real world queries about government information. These pioneer libraries have been so successful that they have attracted sponsorship from sources such as the Alliance Library System and Talis.⁵ The potential role for libraries is virtually unlimited, and the market segment using Second Life represents a computer savvy demographic that many universities and vendors want to attract.

The educational opportunities are the most exciting. For example, the opening of Cybrary City provides a formal place for library continuing education and conferences. Library professionals are discovering possible professional applications of Second Life, which was the subject of major presentations at real world library conferences like 'Internet Librarian 2006.' At that conference, the participating librarians reported on the difficulties of building and maintaining a library in Second Life. For example, some library employers allow librarians to use work time to staff the in-world library while many do not consider time spent on Second Life as 'work.' Second Life occasionally freezes. Only very high capacity video cards can work with Second Life graphics, for example.⁶

Second life is a new and potentially powerful communication tool. Where else can you create walk-in information resources and complex interactive mash-ups? Think of it as an enhanced graphical web search for a new interactive generation, or as a social networking venue, or a university marketing tool, or as informational gaming. Call it part of 'Library 2.0.' For the in-world patron, the avatars and virtual buildings make an in-world informational web search more accurately resemble the real world than a visit to the law library OPAC. It is also fun.

Law schools are beginning to notice. Harvard's CyberOne class might be the first of many classes taught in Second Life. Info Island now contains a room called "Law Spot," with a collection linking to government information. Law libraries have a lot to offer in Second Life. Second Life might be worth a second visit for law librarians. Confused? Teleport in-world and see for yourself.



5. See, Talis sponsors Cybrary City in Second Life, Birmingham, 7th November, 2006, available at: http://www.talis.com/news/press/press_releases.shtml (last visited November 27, 2006).

6. Internet Librarian ppt: http://www.infotoday.com/il2006/presentations/C105_Bell_Peters_Sauers.ppt (last visited November 27, 2006).

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“Second Life libraries are staffed with real world librarians. . . . Students who might not ask questions in the real world library may ask them in Second Life.”

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Website Redesign: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Jean L. Willis

Sacramento County Public Law Library began planning for a website upgrade over two years ago. The intent of this article is to provide you the benefit of our hindsight on this ultimately successful project. We launched our new look in early December, just in time for this issue of *Connecting*.... We are pleased with the updated look and capabilities of our site. As is often the case, though, there were some bumps in the road as we moved from point A (the old site) to point B (the new one).

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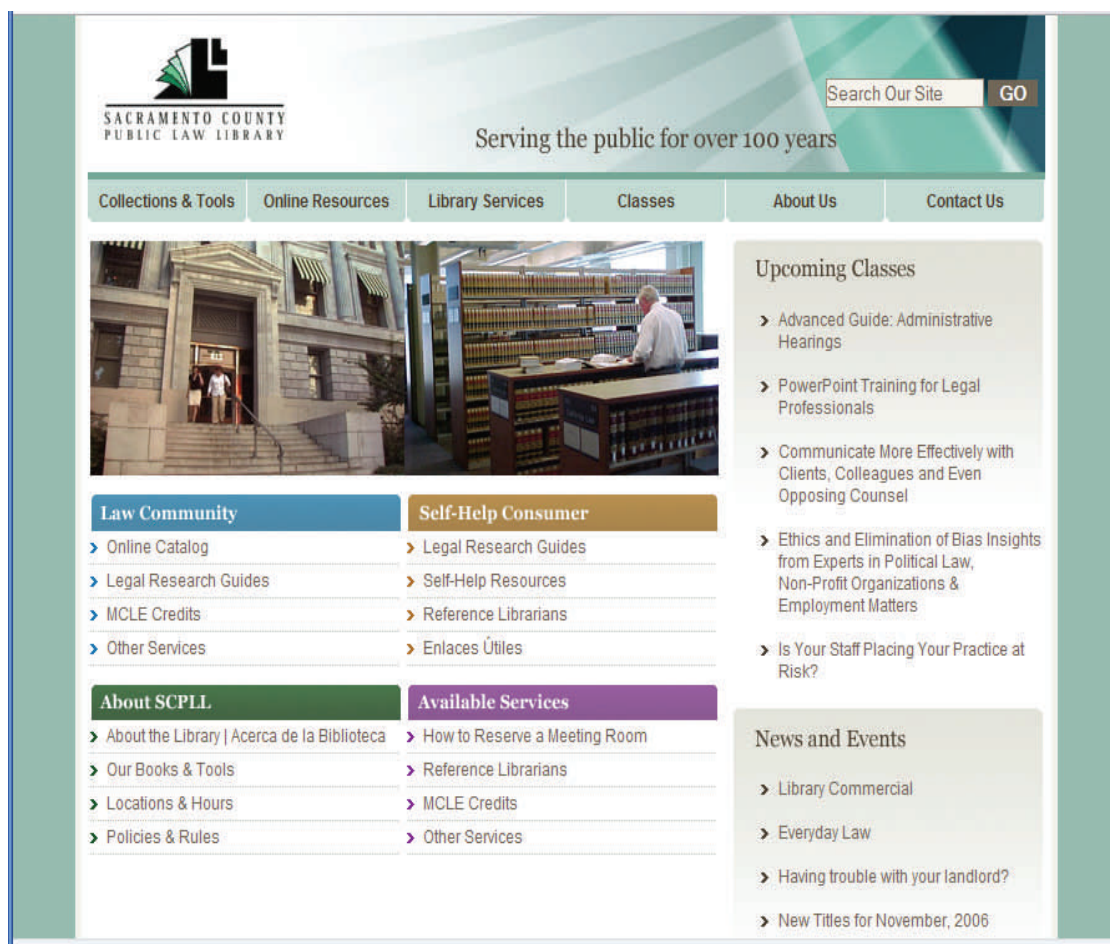


Figure 1. A screen shot displaying the updated look and capabilities of the redesigned Sacramento County Public Law Library website.

Jean L. Willis is Associate Director for Support Services at Sacramento County Public Law Library in Sacramento, California





Website Redesign: *the Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (continued)

The Good

Sacramento County PLL was lucky to have talented staff capable of completing much of the work necessary for this project. We hired a consultant to provide what we thought would be the lion's share of the design and programming work. Although it was definitely a collaborative effort with the consulting group, at this point I am not sure that the consultants put in more hours on the project than our own staff. It was a long, hard slog to get to the finish line. Fortunately our talented programmer and web-savvy librarians pitched in where needed.

The end product looks great and works well. The consulting group did provide us with some invaluable help in developing the new design. We especially needed their help to program the complex e-commerce portion of our site, where patrons can create a web account to register and pay for classes online (nearly 150,000 lines of code). During this stage, I strongly recommend seeking outside feedback to avoid using too much library jargon and to help make the site more user friendly.



The Bad

The project took much longer than anticipated. Some of the responsibility was on us for not allowing enough time up front to clearly and fully R&D our needs/wants/desires. I believe that our RFP could have been more robust and should have included more information about our needs and intentions than it did. I believe that we also had unrealistic expectations in how long it "should" take to complete the programming, content creation, and especially the testing, testing, testing (and editing/re-programming) that was necessary at the end.

Deployment of our site was significantly delayed because our consultants had to re-program much of the e-commerce section. Unknown to us at the time, our consultants implemented significant internal staffing and office changes in the middle of our project. They were not forthcoming about this – in fact, we didn't know that they had moved and that their server address had changed for over two weeks! As a result of these changes, the consultants did not fully wireframe the e-commerce portion of our website. Also because of these changes, the consultants made unilateral (and incorrect) decisions about how to organize and program this complex function. These delays could have been shortened through better communication.

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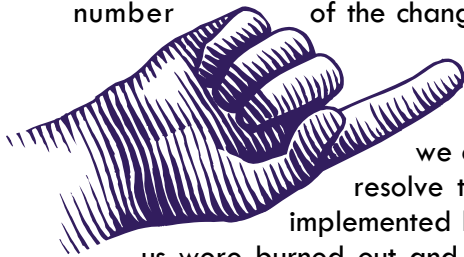




Website Redesign: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly (continued)

The Ugly

Use your imagination! A lot of finger pointing ensued! Our consultants are very young and talented, but our perspective is that their lack of experience caused them to drop the ball at several critical junctures. We had to be tough (but fair) in demanding that they fix the mistakes that they made (lots of “discussions”) and had to be very, very clear about our needs. It was a trying and difficult period made even more so because our programmer was not available to assist with a number of the changes that had to be made at that time.

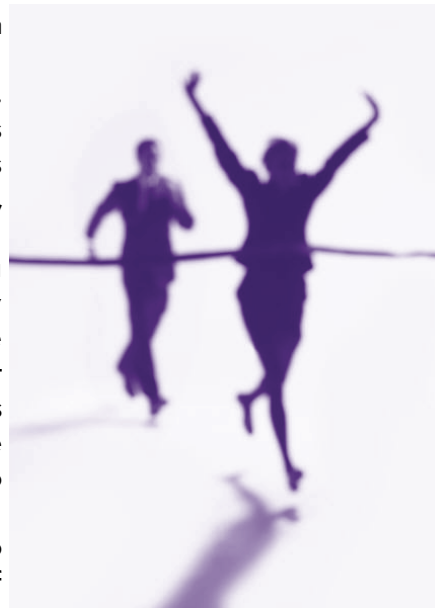


At the end of the project, we again encountered a number of problems with the e-commerce company we chose. More finger-pointing ensued before we could resolve the problems caused by an upgrade that they had implemented but forgot to include us in the mix. By this time, all of us were burned out and found it hard to keep pushing to get the help and resolution we needed.

Was it worth it?

Definitely! Please check out our revitalized site at: <http://www.saclaw.org>.

We realize that our process would have been much shorter and simpler if we had not needed the e-commerce portion included in our site. Sacramento County Public Law Library offers many classes in the Training Center. The classes target attorneys and judges (needless to say, we offer CA MCLE classes), self-represented litigants, law and paralegal students, and a range of legal professionals, including law office administrators and legal secretaries. We wanted an online registration process that permitted class attendees to pay online, but this must be linked to an “Admin” function on the “back end” of the website that permits staff to make changes, such as cancellations or shifting students from one class to another. We also needed this function to provide a range of reports, such as class rosters, etc.



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Website Redesign: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly (continued)

Do's & Don'ts for a Website Redesign Project

- ◇ **Do** investigate thoroughly your options for website design consultants
 - ◇ Check their credentials and references carefully
 - ◇ Have they created other websites with the same features that you need?
- ◇ **Do** consider sending out an RFI before submitting an RFP
 - ◇ Perhaps meet with consultants first prior to sending them an RFP to assess their skills, experience, capabilities and true interest in working with you
- ◇ **Do** thoroughly define your needs
 - ◇ Brainstorm scenarios internally first to come up with everything you need
- ◇ **Do** review the web for RFI/RFP sample formats
 - ◇ Include as much information as possible in both
- ◇ **Do** insist that the consultant provide a complete and thorough wireframe for your entire web site
- ◇ **Do** document thoroughly all conversations held with your consultant and submit notes to them following meetings with “to do” lists included
 - ◇ Make sure that you follow up on the “to do” lists
- ◇ **Don't** rely on one to three references from your consultant; check on at least five
 - ◇ Realize that you will only hear the “good” news and that for every satisfied client, they may also have a dissatisfied client
- ◇ **Don't** expect the project to go smoothly or get done quickly
- ◇ **Do** plan to spend at least one month thoroughly testing the site once it's “done” before planning your launch date
- ◇ **Don't** announce your launch date until you are absolutely certain that it will happen

“ . . . Don't expect the project to go smoothly or get done quickly . . . ”

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Website Redesign: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly (continued)

- ◇ **Do** have as many as staff as possible review your site to offer feedback and editing commentary
- ◇ **Do** ask others outside of your library to review your site and offer commentary as non-librarians
 - ◇ Attempt to change language where possible (this ended up being harder than you think, so good luck with that!)
- ◇ **Do** plan in advance for the cost of the consulting fees
 - ◇ The cheapest fee may not be your best bet
 - ◇ You may need to pay more than you would like to get the product that you need (and it may be more cost-effective in the long run, especially in terms of saving staff time spent “cleaning up” after the consultants)
- ◇ **Do** plan staff time accordingly to assist with various phases of the project, including content population and site editing suggestions
- ◇ **Do** include all relevant staff in appropriate phases of your project
 - ◇ For example, we should have included our Office Manager, who will have to handle aspects of the e-commerce, sooner than we did
- ◇ **Do** plan staff training on your new site prior to launch, if needed
 - ◇ Our procedures for class registration/cancellation have greatly changed
 - ◇ Staff have been trained prior to launch to avoid confusion

Good Luck!

If you are planning a website redesign in the near future, all the best. We all feel that it was well worth the effort and that our patrons will be pleased with the final product. Our next steps include updating our webpac to have a look that seamlessly coordinates with our website and utilizing the new webpage templates to update our internal staff intranet.

◇ ◇ ◇





The Workaholic's Guide to Planning for Maternity Leave

Debbie Ginsberg

Of course, all my planning came to naught. My last day at work was supposed to be Friday. I would then have a whole week to get things ready at home before the baby arrived. After all, this was my first pregnancy, the one everyone always says is going to be late. I saw no point in spending a whole lot of time at home, twiddling my thumbs and surfing through reruns on the TIVO.

The baby arrived on Wednesday.

Fortunately, I had already prepared the library for my maternity leave. I had trained the library webmaster on many other technical tasks, I transferred the bulk of the work for faculty course pages to our faculty administrative assistants, and I had created a 65-page document covering every possible contingency.

Sixty-four of these pages were devoted to my electronic resources duties (one page was for reference duties). The document covered everything from troubleshooting the proxy server to obtaining statistics from our subscription databases. It explained how to handle the day-to-day operations of the Electronic Resources Group, describing what the webmaster and the two student programmers should be doing in the coming weeks. It included detailed instructions, complete with snapshots, for especially important tasks. And it reassured everyone that everything would be just fine during the twelve weeks I would be at home with my new baby.

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Debbie Ginsberg is Electronic Resources Librarian at Chicago-Kent College of Law. Pictures of her baby are posted at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/debgpi>.





The Workaholic's Guide to Planning for Maternity Leave (continued)

If you're an electronic resources librarian who expects to be out on maternity leave or paternity leave soon:

1. **Congratulations!**
2. **Plan early** — babies can come at any time, often when they are least expected. I had completed the bulk of my documentation by early November even though the baby wasn't due until late December.
3. **Write out every task you do each day** — both what's covered by your job description as well as all of the other matters you handle. I had accumulated a lot of tacit knowledge that I hadn't the chance to pass on yet. By writing out everything, I was able to easily determine what the other librarians and staff members needed to know when I was away.
4. **Train others to handle as many of your tasks as you can** — The added benefit of this is even after I returned, other people still handle those tasks!
5. **Beware of over-planning** — At 65 pages, my document was too long. It was sometimes difficult to find instructions for the most important tasks.
6. **Make sure the information is accessible to everyone who needs it** — Wikis are ideal for this kind of document because they are searchable and can be easily modified. Unfortunately, we couldn't install the wiki software properly in time for my leave, so I uploaded a PDF to the library's intranet instead.
7. **Realize you can't plan for everything, but know that all issues will work themselves out** — I had specially trained two student workers to assist the library webmaster during my absence. Both had assured me they would remain at the library throughout the spring semester. Both were gone by the middle of January. Despite this setback, the webmaster was more than able to handle her projects.

Planning for maternity leave was a difficult but rewarding project. It forced me to better organize my work and my time. It allowed me to train others to handle routine tasks. And, in the end, I got a marvelous baby and 12 weeks off with relatively few worries about how the library was holding up. Everyone was fine while I was away – but they were awfully glad to have me back when I returned!





Too Much Information: Filtering RSS Feeds

Bonnie Shucha

RSS feeds are great for delivering frequently updated digital information. You can monitor everything from news, blogs, and podcasts, to judicial opinions. RSS feeds can alert you to important information without having to visit multiple web sites.¹

But how much information is too much information? Undoubtedly, many of the feeds to which you subscribe include at least some information which does not interest you — some more than others. Finding the occasional gem can mean wading through a lot of irrelevant information. Fortunately, there are a number of free Internet tools available to filter your RSS feeds.

Filtering Blog Content

A number of our students and faculty have blogs. They blog about everything — life in and out of the law school; views on the Iraq war; the noisy undergrad eating an apple in the library. Because blogs are a relatively open form of communication, I find that reading them offers a wonderful insight into the thoughts of our users.² However, some of these bloggers are very prolific, while others are a bit too candid. While I really don't want to know what happened at the bar last night, I do want to be alert to comments about the library or the library staff.

Fortunately, there are several tools available for filtering blog content. Both Google Blog Search (<http://blogsearch.google.com/>) and Feedster (<http://www.feedster.com/>) allow you to create a RSS feed based on a keyword search of blog content. When you perform a keyword search using either search engine, you are presented with both your current search results and a subscription link which generates a new RSS feed based on the content of your keyword search. This technique can be used to monitor keywords appearing on any blog, or tailored to search only specific blogs.

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1. For more information about RSS, see my article, "RSS: It's About Time," in the December 2005 issue of *Connecting...*, <http://www.aallnet.org/sis/cssis/newsletter/2005/December05.pdf#page=8>.

2. See Rob Hudson's article, "Law Students Write About Law Libraries (or, What Students Really Think: A Survey of Student Blawgs)" from the *ALL-SIS Newsletter*, http://www.aallnet.org/sis/allsis/newsletter/25_2/Blawgs.htm.

Bonnie Shucha is Head of Reference at the University of Wisconsin Law Library in Madison, Wisconsin





Too Much Information: Filtering RSS Feeds (continued)

There were specific law student and faculty blogs I wished to monitor for mention of the library.³ I therefore used the advanced screen on Google Blog Search. In addition to entering my keywords “library” or “librarian,” I further limited my search by typing the blog’s RSS feed in the “at this URL” box. I then repeated this process for each student or faculty blog. By subscribing to these new feeds generated by Google Blog Search, I now only receive posts that mention the library.

Filtering Other RSS Feeds

Although RSS is associated with blogs, it has many other applications as well. Many data producers are now publishing information via RSS. For example, courts are releasing dockets and opinions via RSS. News media outlets are using RSS to distribute stories. Government agencies such as the SEC are posting filings and announcements via RSS. These are but a few of the current applications, and I suspect that this list will continue to grow.

As with blog content, these RSS feeds may deliver much more information than you need. For example, perhaps you are only interested in tracking court filings involving one particular party. Using an application called Feed Rinse (<http://feedrinse.com/>) you can filter any RSS feed. Simply enter or import your feed(s), then set up filters to block or allow posts by keyword, tag or author. Your new “rinsed” feed will be available for export via OPML to your feed reader.

Combining Feeds

Do you have a select group of RSS feeds — filtered or otherwise — that you wish to share? Using Feed Jumbler (<http://feedjumbler.com/>), you can combine multiple feeds into a single master feed. Combining feeds provides a practical way to recommend groups of feeds to others. For example, using Feed Jumbler you can easily share a single “jumbled” feed regarding student library comments with interested colleagues rather than the individual feeds you created for each blog. As an added benefit, this will also slim down your own RSS subscription list.

Receiving Filtered RSS Feeds via Email, IM or Cell Phone

Are you interested in RSS feeds but not comfortable using that technology? With ZapTXT (<http://zaptxt.com>), you can subscribe to RSS feeds and receive alerts via email, IM, cell phone or other mobile device. You can either receive everything posted to the feed or filter your results with optional keywords. This is also an ideal way of sharing feeds with others who may not be acquainted with RSS, since you can input their email, etc. directly instead of your own.

As librarians, information is our business. We pride ourselves with locating just the right information at just the right time. RSS is an amazing tool which can alert us to the information we need, but too much information can be overwhelming. Fortunately, by using the above tools to filter RSS feeds, we can streamline the process of information gathering.



3. See Rob Hudson’s article, “Law Students Write About Law Libraries (or, What Students Really Think: A Survey of Student Blawgs)” from the ALL-SIS Newsletter, http://www.aallnet.org/sis/allsis/newsletter/25_2/Blawgs.htm.





What I Gained From the AALL Annual Conference in St. Louis

Marin Dell

First, thank you to the CS-SIS for the 2006 grant, which paid for my St. Louis AALL registration. As a new librarian, a meeting like AALL is a goldmine of law librarianship and other information. Attending the St. Louis conference gave me the opportunity to talk to law librarians who were relative “newbies” like me, and others who had been law librarians for years and years! I talked to the newbies about that nervous feeling you have when getting a reference question you don’t really understand and how weird it is to work in an environment where everyone knows everyone else, coast to coast! With the experienced law librarians I talked about how technology is changing what people traditionally think of as librarianship and how law students have changed . . . and ways they definitely have not changed.

I really enjoyed the opportunity to attend the CS-SIS breakfast and business meeting. It was a bit early in the morning to have my mind expanded so totally by John Mayer’s presentation on a new legal information interface for public patrons, but I enjoyed it immensely. His project is intricately fantastic and really made me proud to be a law library techie-type. Although I work at a law school, I loved hearing about new ways to use technology for public patrons and I am still thinking about ways to translate some of the ideas I heard that morning for my own library.



A simple yet great experience for me in St. Louis was sitting in the conference hotel. Well, I was people watching. Okay, I was EAVSEDRIPPING! So, who did I see? Cool . . . Jim Milles! I had heard his podcasting presentation at CALI just about a month earlier and I wanted to bug him by telling him how much I enjoyed his presentation. He was so cordial and generous to speak to me, and I consider his CALI presentation the beginning of my podcasting education. Of course, I still listen to Check This Out! regularly.

After the St. Louis AALL conference, I finally felt confident enough to create my own podcasts after listening to the Invasion of the Podcasting People presentation. I now feel that podcasting is accessible to me, and I don’t feel strange about venturing out into the podcast world on my own!

Thanks again for the opportunity to attend AALL in St. Louis. I look forward to meeting more CS-SIS members in New Orleans and delving into more law school technology.



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About Connecting . . .

Connecting... is the newsletter of the Computing Services Special Interest Section of the American Association of Law Libraries. *Connecting...* is published semiannually, and is available in PDF format from the AALL website, located at <http://www.aallnet.org/sis/cssis/>.

This issue of *Connecting...* was edited by Eric W. Kistler, Head of Access and Electronic Services, Ehrhorn Law Library, Liberty University School of Law.



About the AALL Computing Services SIS

With members from all types of libraries, whose functions range from network and system administrators, lab supervisors, and webmasters to department heads and library directors, the Computing Services Special Interest Section serves the fastest-growing sector within law librarianship. Above all, Computing Services SIS members are law librarians dedicated to serving all the information needs of their library users with the aid of computing technologies.

Top 10 Web Fads

1. **Hampsterdance** (1998)
<http://www.hampsterdance.com/>
2. **Mahir** (1999)
3. **All your Base are Belong to Us** (1998-2001)
<http://allyourbase.planettribes.gamespy.com/>
4. **Dancing Baby** (1997)
<http://allyourbase.planettribes.gamespy.com/>
5. **Hot or Not** (2000)
<http://hotornot.com/>
6. **Friendster** (2003)
<http://www.friendster.com/>
7. **Ellen Feiss** (2002)
<http://ellenfeiss.net/>
8. **Star Wars Kid** (2002)
<http://www.ebaumsworld.com/starwarskidv.html>
9. **Blogger** (1999)
<http://www.blogger.com/>
10. **JibJab** (2004)
<http://www.jibjab.com/>

Source: Molly Wood, *Top 10 Web Fads*, c|net.com,
http://www.cnet.com/4520-11136_1-6268155-1.html

