



# Connecting...

The Newsletter of Computing Services SIS  
American Association of Law Libraries



Connecting...

## Message from the Chair

Volume 5 Issue 2

### In This Issue:

As the whirlwind days of my final weeks in office slip through my fingers, I want to take a moment, breathe, and look back at some of what we have accomplished. I feel that one of the most vital tasks of the SIS is to contribute to the education and professional development of its members. One of the biggest opportunities to help our members in this way comes during the AALL Annual Meeting. This year we have five extraordinary CS-SIS sponsored programs at AALL. The thanks for those programs must go out to a wonderful program committee, as well as to our hardworking members who submitted such a great group of program proposals. Look for some of the program materials, including a copyright resource page for multimedia presentations, to appear on the CS-SIS Web page.

*Message from the Chair,* 1

In addition to the AALL programs, we get to look forward to what promises to be a fascinating discussion on the future of law librarianship with Professor Roy Mersky at our Breakfast Meeting. Hopefully you have all already registered for the breakfast. I must thank our Executive Board Member-at-Large, June Liebert, for her hard work on helping to put this together.

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This year we also formed a completely new committee on blawgs. This committee created their own blawg to support librarians interested and involved in blogging. Their posts range from help troubleshooting to new and interesting blawgs. I give all credit for this committee's work to co-chairs Bonnie Shucha and Debbie Ginsberg and their committee members. If you haven't looked recently, check out their blawg at <http://cssisblawgs.bloki.com/>.

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For the second year in a row, CS-SIS conducted a successful electronic election. Our nominations committee did a great job selecting a slate of candidates. A special thanks goes out to all of the candidates for taking up the challenge of running for an office. I can't wait to start working with our new Board!

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As much as I am proud of our accomplishments this year, the future must be planned for too. The CS-SIS member survey is coming soon, so look for it on the CS-SIS Web site. We're also in the process of developing a new strategic plan for the SIS. While I'll be sad to be letting go, I know the SIS will be in good hands. With such a wonderful group of members to draw on, how could it be otherwise?

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### On The Front Lines, By Ken Hirsh

Director of Computing Services and  
Senior Lecturing Fellow at Duke University School of Law.

### The 24x7x365 Work Year

For a period of about eighteen months beginning eleven years ago I gave a series of presentations on the topic of “Technostress.” Based on the book of that title by Craig Brod, the presentation dealt primarily with the physiological problems confronted by users of the increasingly pervasive personal computer. The book deals with the psychological aspects as well, and now that another dozen years have passed, cell phones and PDAs have been added to the list of stressors.

Working in an academic environment that has an entering summer class, we never truly have a “down time” for our computing services staff. Summer is occupied by refreshing computer images, ordering and installing new computers, introducing the summer students to our environment, and planning for fall orientation. Of course the academic year is busy with providing support to all our users - faculty, staff, and students. Finding the time when a staff member can take a real vacation is a constant challenge.

The era of cell phones and PDAs has made the concept of “getting away” an illusory one. You are reachable virtually anywhere. Yes, you can turn off the device, but that is not the issue. Rather, the question is whether you should turn it off. Might something happen back at the office that needs your attention? Is that a real possibility, or an exaggerated sense of self-importance? Or is it self-defense, anticipating the 2,000 unanswered emails that await if you don’t deal with them in the interim? As they said in the Fram filters ad, “you can pay me now or pay me later.”

So is there a solution, a magic bullet for reclaiming a personal life while still delivering a first class job performance? How does one strike a balance between the never-ending demands of the work environment while maintaining a healthful personal life? Is this a problem for many of us, or merely the confirmed workaholics? Or are most of us allowing ourselves to become workaholics to some degree?



You won’t find the answer in this column. But I welcome your suggestions, any time of day.



From The Editor:

I want to thank everyone for their help with Connecting... over the past 5 years. This will be the last issue I publish. Eric Kistler has volunteered to edit this newsletter so that we can continue bringing information to our members. I wish him success in his efforts.

I have enjoyed the challenges that arose in both the editing and the publishing of the newsletter. Thanks to CS-SIS for the opportunity to grow in this field.

Liz Glankler  
Editor, CS-SIS





## More Than a Keychain: USB Flash Drives, By Debbie Ginsberg

Electronic Resources Librarian

Illinois Institute of Technology, Downtown Campus Library (Chicago-Kent College of Law)

Like everyone else who went to AALL last year, I brought home plenty of tchotchkes. Most of the stuff I gave away, but one item was definitely a keeper – a 64M USB flash drive. How could I possibly part with something that could put the capacity of nearly 50 floppies on my keychain?

USB flash drives are solid-state memory sticks which can plug into nearly any USB port. The size of a pack of gum (or an iPod Shuffle), these drives can currently hold up to 8G. Smaller drives (around 64M or so) cost around \$10, while the largest can cost thousands, especially if they have extra features. Many users like the 1G size, which might run anywhere from \$75 - \$100.

Since almost every computer now has at least one USB port, flash drives are nearly universally compatible. Unlike a floppy, you can be sure you'll be able to load your files no matter where you take your work. Flash drives work with Windows, Mac, and UNIX, although older systems may require specialized drivers. In most cases, users simply need to plug in their keys and they are ready to go with little or no further effort.



Most of us, of course, use flash drives to transfer and store files. However, more programs are being written to work directly from flash drives, letting users run common software without having to install anything on computer hard drives. Programs which can be run directly from flash drives include Trillian, Firefox, and even Linux.

While many laud its portability and easy of use even the best flash drive will have limitations. Most problematic is the drive's limited life cycle – files can be written to a drive perhaps 100,000 times. While more than enough for most people, no one should depend on a flash drive for permanent storage.

Some drives require more power than others. In general, users will plug into the USB ports on their computers and won't run into this problem. However, ports on keyboards or monitors may produce insufficient power to run most flash drives.

Are flash drives just a passing fad? Some say they will soon be replaced with cheaper and higher-capacity microdrives. While microdrives may provide more storage for a bit less money, they are not as compact as flash drives. Current versions of microdrives can fit in a pocket, but not on a keychain.

Nor do microdrives seem as durable. The flash drive's solid-state design can take a great deal of wear and tear. Users have been known to drop, bash, and even wash their flash drives with no discernable damage (the author does not recommend you try these at home). How many other computer components can claim they are "wash and wear"?

Finally, microdrives aren't as fungible. When you look around at AALL this year, you'll likely see a few vendors handing out logo-enhanced USB flash drives. Microdrives, if they are present anywhere, might be prizes hidden behind some product display. The vendor market alone is likely to keep flash drives in business for some time.



## RFID: The State of Things to Come, By Jean Willis

Assistant Director for Support Services  
Sacramento County Public Law Library

Radio Frequency Identification tags are more ubiquitous than you might think. You also might be thinking: what the heck is RFID, anyway? Some of you know about it, and some don't. Following this brief discussion is a non-exhaustive reference list to mainly online sources of information about RFID and its use in libraries and law firms.

RFID offers a means of "smart" tagging items so that they can be scanned quickly and tracked in numerous ways. RFID is making headway in the retail and manufacturing sector for managing inventory and supply of products. You may have seen some RFID tags already in paperbacks purchased in a book store, or you may not know that you use one daily when you lock and unlock your newer model car with a remote device.

RFID tags or transponders used to be larger, and like most technology, they grow increasingly smaller. A RFID "smart" tag is a transponder with an integrated miniature circuit with an antenna; a chip is attached to store data. The whole apparatus can be housed between thin sheets of polymer or even paper to form a label or tag.

RFID labels require a special device or reader to detect the information on them, but most integrated library systems can now accommodate the use of RFID tagging to circulate books and materials. The labels, or tags, themselves can be coded with a book's information for tracking in a circulation database. The good news for libraries is that RFID tags streamline circulation and collection inventory procedures, which can be especially important in libraries with large, heavily circulating collections. The lack of need for line of sight to check out books (as is needed with bar coded items), along with the capability to check out seven or more items at once make this an incredibly convenient device.

The cons are mainly two-fold: cost and privacy. Right now the cost of most library-oriented programmable RFID tags is close to fifty cents per tag. And yes, any item that you wish to circulate in your library must have a tag manually attached. Publishers are beginning to sell books with RFID tags already inserted in the books, but programming on the tag must be completed by the purchasing library. Obviously, to tag an existing collection represents a large investment in terms of equipment and tag purchase price, as well as the labor to program and install the tags.

The return on investment (ROI) must be measured carefully. Some larger libraries have found that the costs to install the system are amortized over time, and that the benefits outweigh the costs. A secondary, but important, by-product of RFID tagging is that collection inventory and maintenance becomes easier, faster, and more accurate. Special readers can be taken into the stacks and "wanded" past the shelves. Some libraries have found up to 4000 missing items during their first inventory session, which can save tens of thousands of dollars in book replacement costs.

The other "con" concerns privacy issues, which are addressed more fully in some of the articles listed in the following Reference List. Because RFID tags contain programmable information, and because they can potentially be "read" by someone with the right type of equipment, there is concern about patron privacy. A library needs to program certain types of library data, such as a book identifier (i.e., possibly the bar code), onto the RFID tag so that it could interact with the library's ILS. At checkout, the tag would also input temporary data about the patron checking out the item.

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While the likelihood of random people reading library RFID tags once an item is checked out is remote, the concern is not unwarranted. However, newer RFID tag technologies help “hide” patron information from such intrusion. Standards are under investigation to further ensure patron privacy, but it’s possible that early adaptors of the technology may miss out on the latest protocols.

At this time, some larger law firms are also investigating the use of RFID tagging for their files. For those of us who have worked in a law firm, the benefits are immediately obvious. Busy legal professionals can be issued an RFID “borrower’s” card to use when removing files from the file room. Because the check out process doesn’t require the finicky line of sight needed with bar coded materials, attorneys might be more willing to actually check out the files. Even when files go missing, it should be easier to locate those using hand-held scanners, even if it involves an office to office search. Law firm libraries could piggy-back onto a RFID installation in their firm’s file room, as most RFID technology currently integrates with many standard integrated library systems in addition to file management systems. The same tags and equipment could be used in both the file room and law library, so that the costs of purchase, labor and training could be minimized.

For more information in greater detail, please refer to the following articles. Most are available on the Internet.

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## My 10 Favorite Things About Texas

By Mary Forman, Semi-Native



My great-great-great uncle, Thomas Jefferson Chambers, came to Texas in the 1820s. Chambers County in east Texas is named after him. I, however, am a relative newcomer. Although I've only lived in Texas for 10 years, I have compiled quite a list of things I love about Texas. Here are 10 of them focused almost exclusively on San Antonio – 10 reasons for you to come to AALL in July – and to come back and visit again. As Texas singer/songwriter Gary P. Nunn (famous for the Austin City Limits theme song – London Homesick Blues aka Home with the Armadillo) would say, “You ask me what I like about Texas.... Well, I could tell you, but we'd be here all night long.” So I've limited it to 10....

10. Patio dining – Eating outside – good Mexican food – a cold beverage – well, it's a favorite pastime of many. When it's hot, you sit under an umbrella. When it's cold they fire up the heaters. We eat outside all year long.
9. Boat cruise on the San Antonio River. Yep, even the locals ride it! It's great fun and you always learn something new.
8. Gruene, Texas, and the Guadalupe River. Great shopping (and I don't even like shopping!), lunch at the Gristmill Restaurant, and a stop at Gruene Hall (Texas' oldest dance hall) to listen to whoever's playing, or tubing down the Guadalupe River, taking out at Gruene and then doing the above. Old or young, it's a fun way to spend the day!
7. Walking through the King William District and having breakfast (preferably on the patio) at the Guenther House.
6. Music, music, music. Country, symphony, you name it, we've got it – and I love it all.
5. Steak Night in Waring, Texas. Wednesday night is steak night at the country store in Waring, Texas. Come back sometime and experience it!
4. The Majestic Theatre. Arguably the most beautiful theatre in Texas (maybe the world?).
3. Visiting any Texas State Park. Three of my nearby favorites include Garner, Lost Maples, and Enchanted Rock.
2. Wildflowers. They start in March with bluebonnets, but they continue on throughout the spring, summer, and fall. Lady Bird Johnson was on to something....

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1. The people. They come in all shapes, sizes, colors, cultures, and personal beliefs, but despite their differences, there is something that draws them together – something my buddy, Gary P. Nunn, calls “the spirit of the people who share this land.”

**Welcome to Texas!**

## CS-SIS Meetings & Events in San Antonio, July, 2005

Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup>:

- CS-SIS Executive Board Meeting (2004–2005 and 2005-2006) 3:00–5:00pm
- TS/OBS/RIPS/CS-SIS Joint Reception (sponsored by III) 6:00–7:30p.m.

Sunday, July 17<sup>th</sup>:

- Program A1: Creating & Using Interactive Electronic Legal Research Lessons 10:00-11:30a.m.  
Speakers: Kristina L. Niedringhaus, Elizabeth Adelman, Deb Quentel, Katherine Topulos  
Are you searching for a productive way to use technology to engage your students and improve the learning process? Would you like to develop tutorials for use outside the classroom? Did you know that it is possible to modify existing lessons to meet your instructional needs? This program will outline the benefits of using interactive electronic legal research lessons as part of your instruction and show how easy it is to utilize interactive electronic lessons in your teaching. You will see how simple it can be to create your own lessons or tutorials.
- Program C1: Raise Your Standards, Improve Your World, and Create Universal Web Pages 4:15-5:15p.m.  
Speakers: June Liebert, David J. Cook  
Patrons no longer connect to the Internet solely through a laptop or desktop computer. Increasingly people view Web pages through PDAs, screen readers, and even phones. They expect constantly fresh content and design. This presents a challenge for Web designers, since they must create and continually update pages that work in many different environments without exhausting themselves and their resources. This program will demonstrate how Web standards separate content from design, which enables you to create universally accessible Web pages while making it easier to update your site.
- CS-SIS Business Meeting 5:30–6:30p.m.

Monday, July 18<sup>th</sup>:

- CS-SIS Breakfast Meeting featuring Professor Roy Mersky and the Future of Law Librarianship 7:00–8:45a.m.
- Roundtable: Web Design and Maintenance 10:15–11:30a.m.
- CS-SIS Program Committee Meeting 5:15–6:15p.m.

Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>:

- Roundtable: Instructional Technology 11:45a.m.–1:00p.m.





Wednesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>:

- Program J2: 30 Cheap Web Development Tools in 30 Minutes 1:30-2:00 p.m.  
Speaker: Susan M. Boland  
Librarians of all types use intranets and Web pages to push information to their patrons. Patrons expect to be able to find basic information about a subject or library on the Web. Many librarians are thrown into supervisory or Webmaster roles without a generous supporting budget or much training. This program identifies free and low-cost Web development tools to help librarians improve their Web sites without breaking their budget.
- Program K1: Multimedia Presentations: How to Get Copyright Clearance and Other Permissions for Digital Projects 2:15-3:45p.m.  
Speaker: Laura N. Gasaway Coordinator: Lyonette Louis-Jacques  
Anticipating legal issues is critical before starting a multimedia project. This session will examine how to get copyright clearance and other permissions for multimedia presentations. In addition, the speaker will discuss intellectual property aspects of using sound and images in digital projects. Following the presentation will be a step-by-step guide on the types of permissions or rights you need and the actual addresses for getting the right to use nonpublic domain works in multimedia presentations. The program will be supplemented by a resources guide on the Computing Services SIS Web site.
- Program K4: Beyond the Blog: RSS, Wikis, and Blikis 2:15-3:45p.m.  
Speakers: Deborah Ginsberg and Bonnie Shucha  
By now, most of us have heard of “blogs.” Many librarians use them to help stay current. But with ever-increasing numbers of legal and research blogs from which to choose, how can you possibly keep track of them all? RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds can help you organize your favorite blogs in one place with little time and effort. This session will show you several available programs and offer pointers about how to find new feeds.  
Although blogs help to organize information, they are not an ideal solution for long-term projects. Enter “wikis” and “blikis.” Wikis (from a Hawaiian word meaning “fast”) are sites especially designed for collaborative information projects. They can be set up quickly and edited by any project member. Blikis are crosses between blogs and wikis – metablogs that can be edited by blog participants. This program will also demonstrate how wikis and blikis are already used in research and in the law, as well as how you can create them yourself.

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### CS-SIS Roundtables:

This year, CS-SIS is sponsoring two roundtables. The Roundtable on Web Design and Maintenance will be on Monday, July 18<sup>th</sup> from 10:15–11:30 a.m. Join us for a discussion on technical and political Web design and maintenance issues. How are you making your sites ADA accessible? Are you using Content Management Systems? Cold Fusion or ASP? What training have you had or would like to have and how does your institution support these training needs? Be sure and bring your opinions and comments. Let’s learn from each other!

The Roundtable on Instructional Technology will take place on Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup> from 11:45 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Join us for a discussion on smart classrooms and courtrooms, hardware and software issues, online course management systems, getting faculty to use that new fangled stuff, and more!



## CS-SIS Grants Committee Selects Four Recipients

Every year, the CS-SIS Grants Committee solicits applications for grants in an effort to provide financial assistance to librarians who hold promise of future involvement in the law library profession, especially those who are directly involved in providing technology support of any kind within law libraries. Our committee was fortunate to receive a number of excellent applications this year. We are pleased to report that the following four librarians will receive a CS-SIS grant:

David Lehmann  
Law Fellow – James E. Rogers Law Fellowship  
University of Arizona Law Library

Denise Potter  
Law Librarian  
Mercer County Law Library

Eric Young  
Law Clerk for the Honorable S. Arthur Spiegel  
United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio

Bonnie Shucha  
Reference and Electronic Services Librarian  
University of Wisconsin Law Library

David, Eric, and Bonnie will all receive a grant covering the \$385.00 registration fee for the annual AALL conference. Denise will receive a grant covering the \$100.00 registration fee for CONELL. In addition, we are pleased to report that we have invited each of our grant recipients to be our guests at the CS-SIS breakfast this July.

Congratulations to all, and we hope everyone will have a chance to meet and congratulate our grant recipients in San Antonio.

Lastly, I would like to thank the committee members, Susan Boland, Irene Good, and Melissa Serfass for their exceptional work this spring.

Cynthia Lewis  
Electronic Resources Librarian  
UCLA School of Law  
Chair of the CS-SIS Grants Committee





### Elections:

The Computing Services SIS recently held its annual election of officers using entirely electronic balloting for the second year in a row.

Congratulations to our new officers:

- Incoming Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect: **Kris Niedringhaus**
- Incoming Secretary/Treasurer: **Eric Young**
- Incoming Member-at-Large: **Debbie Ginsberg**

They will join the continuing members of our 2004-2005 Executive Board:

- 2005-2006 Chair: **Dominick Grillo**
- 2004-2006 Member-at-Large: **Robert Jacoby**
- 2005-2006 Immediate Past Chair: **Susan Boland**

A fond farewell and huge thank-you to our Board members whose terms are expiring:

- 2003-2005 Secretary/Treasurer: **Vicki Szymczak**
- 2003-2005 Member-at-Large: **June Liebert**
- 2004-2005 Immediate Past Chair: **Don Arndt**



**When: Tuesday, July 19, following the ALL-SIS Reception at St. Mary's Law School, i.e., between 9:30 and 10:00 PM**

**Where: Steers & Beers Steakhouse & Saloon, 849 E. Commerce #101, in the Rivercenter Mall, which is adjacent to the Marriott.**

**Get Together: Meet in the lobby of the Marriott Rivercenter following the ALL-SIS reception, around 9:30 P.M. Then we'll walk to Steers & Beers. Or meet us at the restaurant later.**

**For more information see our webpage:**

<http://www.law.duke.edu/ken/karaoke2005.html>