

Spring 2014

## Southeastern Law Librarian Spring 2014

SEAALL

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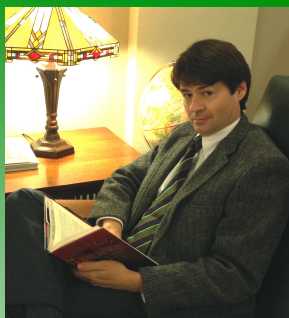
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## Presidential Ponderings

### “Can you see the real me, can you?”



#### **SEAALL President**

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The major theme of The Who's Quadrophenia is a search for self-identity. Does your identity come from the group to which you belong or from your school, your job, or your family? How do you self-identify? I've found that this search for identity also runs through many articles written by and for librarians during the last twenty years. What is a librarian today? What is her role? What should she be? Although I do not claim to have any answers, I do know that this puzzle is one which we are all working on solving.

The theme of our annual meeting in Knoxville, “New Frontiers,” was in keeping with this search for identity. Our Friday Institute was called “Show Your Career Who's Boss.” Programs focused on the librarian career itself, including topics on hiring a new librarian, job satisfaction, and succession planning. I would like to thank Jennifer Behrens and Sara Mauldin for their work on the institute, and for securing a AALL/Bloomberg BNA Continuing Education Grant to both run and record it. I also want to thank the other members of the Program Committee: Shamika Dalton, Rachel Gordon, Cindy Hirsch, Katie Miller, Patty Morgan, Kris Tobin, Candle Wester, and Eric Young. Of course, I must thank our wonderful Co-Chairs of the Local Arrangements Committee, Katherine Marsh and Reba Best, and their crew: Ann Long and Loretta Price. Everything ran smoothly thanks to help from volunteers. Thank you to the UT volunteers: Nathan Preuss, Sybil Marshall, Cathy Cochran, Carol Collins, Phyllis McWilliams, Suzanne Smalley, Karen Principe, de Burns, Beth Offshack, Rebecca Tweed, and Associate Dean Scott Childs. A giant thank you to Jeff Groah, who handled all the a/v equipment. Thank you to the Lincoln volunteers: Randy Clark, Deanna Breeding, Allen Steele, Jonathan Connor, and Associate Dean Gordon Russell.

Knoxville proved to be an excellent choice. The conference hotel was within walking distance of restaurants, clubs, shops, and both sponsoring law schools. The opening reception at Club LeConte, high atop the First Tennessee Bank building, offered views of Knoxville and the Smokey Mountains. Our Community Service Partner this year was the Knoxville affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. SEAALL members

contributed books for children, and SEAALL donated a check to the organization. Shawn Friend, of Florida Coastal School of Law, made a quilt from T-shirts of the law schools within SEAALL, which was auctioned off for the benefit of the Imagination Library. On Saturday morning, following a wonderful breakfast, Dr. Bill Bass regaled us with stories from his days as a forensic anthropologist.

SEAALL offers a wide array of options for librarians looking to expand beyond the confines of their jobs. Participation in SEAALL allows members to assume leadership roles, help out the community, prepare programs with librarians in other libraries, and network. Members can learn and grow professionally in ways that otherwise may not be open to them. I feel thankful to be a member of SEAALL, and even more so to have the opportunity to be your president.

I was delighted to find that many of the programs scheduled for the AALL meeting in San Antonio will be presented by SEAALL members. I hope to see you there.

## **A new day for SRLs leaps forward in Louisiana**

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When Georgia Chadwick, Director of the Law Library of Louisiana, was introduced to Michael Schachtman, Self-Represented Litigation Counsel with the Louisiana State Bar Association's Access to Justice program, at the bar's Pro Bono Awards ceremony last summer, the first thing she asked him was, "Why is my library always left out?" This chance encounter led to the formation of a new statewide coalition with the state bar, the state law library, law school libraries, public libraries and legal aid organizations dedicated to meeting the informational needs of self-represented litigants (SRLs).

Georgia was especially keen to talk about ways that the law library could facilitate connections with public librarians across the state. Because Louisiana does not have parish law libraries, SRLs who don't live near the Law Library of Louisiana in New Orleans can be at a loss for hands-on legal information assistance. Public librarians, Georgia knew, are often reticent to help when confronted with legal reference questions for fear of practicing law without a license. With little or no training in understanding the difference between legal information and legal advice, they are understandably cautious. But even the public librarians who feel more comfortable assisting SRLs had very few resources to offer them.

These concerns sparked in Michael and Georgia an idea for a new program. LEAP, which stands for Legal Education and Assistance Program, was born. Georgia facilitated a connection between Michael and the Louisiana Library Association (LLA), which includes hundreds of members from the state's parish public libraries. The president of LLA, Vivian McCain, and the chair of the Public Library section, Laura-Ellen Ayres,

were immediately enthusiastic, echoing the same concerns about lack of training and resources. Data from the state law library, the public libraries, the state's legal self-help website, run by Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, showed that the range of legal questions ranged from fairly simple such as, "How do I change my name?" to the more complex, like, "How do I get an expungement of my criminal record?" The common denominator was the need for resources and training for the public librarians.

The first step for the LEAP committee thus was outreach. Michael arranged a panel at the LLA's statewide conference in March. Fran Norton, also with the Law Library of Louisiana, Lisa Stansky, statewide website administrator for LouisianaLawHelp.org, Sara Pic, former public interest attorney and MLIS student at LSU, along with Michael, presented a program for about thirty librarians on "Legal Self-Help in Public Libraries." In addition, a LEAP booth was manned throughout the conference where public librarians filled out surveys about what kinds of support they need when confronted with legal reference questions, for a chance at winning a gift basket with over \$200 in gift cards and fun office supplies for their library, sponsored by the state bar. Over two hundred responses were gathered. About half the surveys indicated that the public librarians were faced with at least one legal reference question every week. The need for LEAP, it appeared, was even greater than anticipated.

After the LLA conference, the chief concern for the LEAP committee was how to quickly and effectively handle the broadest range of questions. The committee agreed that not all questions could or should be answered by public librarians. For the difficult questions, a clearer triage process between the public libraries and the state law library was needed. But LEAP estimated approximately 75% of the questions received were simple enough that resources could be developed by LEAP for the public libraries to assist with the most basic and most frequent questions. One method that jumped out to the committee was the creation of LibGuides. Law librarians across the state volunteered to take this challenge on. LSU Law Library stepped forward with the offer to host the LibGuides while the LEAP committee worked on a process to make sure the LibGuide content was written specifically for public librarians and their patrons. In the next year, the Law Library of Louisiana also plans to start providing legal reference trainings to public librarians across the state.

One year after that chance encounter between Michael and Georgia and already the impact has been felt in libraries across the state. With so many talented and passionate partners, the possibilities to excel in service to SRLs are unlimited.

**Have something to say? Well, don't keep it hid!**

### Opportunity!

Become an author in the Southeastern Law Librarian! Share your articles, notes, comments, ideas, and cocktail recipes with our part of the world. Everyone loves to see a familiar name in the SEALL Newsletter! Contact Ryan Valentin with your proposal: [ravale2@email.uky.edu](mailto:ravale2@email.uky.edu)

# Editor's Bit

## Adorable Killers



### SEAALL Newsletter Editor

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Like many librarians, I get my news from a variety of sources. I read *Der Spiegel* on a regular basis. Two stories caught my attention recently due to professionally related subject-matter: gray hair and cats.

*Volunteers Wanted: Locals Help Save Germany's Shrinking Towns* discusses how the graying population of Germany is impacting small rural towns the hardest. Naturally this reminded me of the graying library population and the impact it will have on libraries. A February 2003 AALL article asked "will librarians go the way of the Dodo bird?" Citing an aging population, lack of recruitment efforts, and movement towards digitization, the prognosis for law librarians was not good. The article even suggested that the ultimate fate of law librarians may "be tied to how effectively the general library community can recruit new librarians to overcome its own dwindling numbers of information professionals." Seven years later a 2009 report prepared for the ALA found "41 percent of librarians are in their 50's" and "are perched on the precipice of what most think of as retirement years."

*Adorable Killers: The Shocking Truth about Cats* describes the house cat as "one of the world's most destructive predators, killing for kicks and hunting rare species to extinction." As a card carrying member of the Audubon society, I was dismayed to discover house cats in the United States kill billions of birds each year. Some environmentalists and economists in New Zealand have even called for the elimination of cats. Let me be clear here lest I *unintentionally* offend other librarians and cat people – although I am highly allergic to cats and am not owned by one, I did grow up with, and am generally fond of, cats.

How can it be that both species, librarians and cats, are at risk of elimination in this modern world? The AALL article concluded by noting "[s]tatistically, the future of law librarianship is less than rosy. The decreasing number of qualified applicants, the imminent swell of librarian retirements in the next 10 years, and its low salaries and status don't bode well for the profession." So here we are, 10 years after that AALL article. What does the future of law librarianship look like now? Have the number of qualified applicants decreased? Or has there been a question about what makes an applicant qualified? Has the imminent swell of retirements happened? Or are those eligible to retire still driving that train? What this article did not account for and could not account for was the economic crisis in the United States in 2008. This may be one of many conditions that account for individuals working beyond the time they had planned to.

Let's revisit the plight of the Dodo – extinct. There are many

theories about how the Dodo became extinct. I am not aware of any that suggest it was due to house cat predation. Some attribute their demise to deforestation, invasive species, or natural disaster. When I was younger I heard a brutish story, no doubt from ill-bred children, about why the Dodo had gone extinct. You see, the story goes that the Dodo was a stupid bird. It was deemed stupid because it was not afraid of humans. Because of their alleged stupidity they were preyed upon to extinction.

An account of the Dodo from the *Vindiciae Bataviae* (1682): “These animals on our coming up to them stared at us and remained quiet where they stand...and without so much as moving either one step forwards or backwards, suffering us to approach them as close as we pleased...[a]mongst these birds were those which in India they call Dodaersen (being a kind of very big goose); the birds are unable to fly, and instead of wings, they merely have a few small pins, yet they can run very swiftly.” Although the Dodo may have been fearless of humans, it was not a stupid bird. I believe the Dodo was a smart, curious, and rare species. A kind host that would approach any new species that happened upon the shores of Mauritius with a friendly greeting and inquiring mind.

However, this well-mannered courtesy was not reciprocated by the guests. The *Vindiciae* account goes on to say: “We drove them together into one place in such a manner that we could catch them with our hands, and when we held one of them by its leg, and that upon this it made a great noise, the others all of a sudden came running as fast as they could to its assistance, and by which they were caught and made prisoners also.” To characterize the Dodo as being stupid because it did not have fear is contemptible.

The Dodo became extinct because it found itself in a world that no longer would tolerate its existence. A world that no longer saw value in its being. Whether its demise be attributed to a type of predation, environmental degradation, or other force majeure does not really matter. The Dodo is gone and we are all the worse off because of this.

*(Originally in KLaw Prints - February 8, 2013)*

## **Next Annual SEAALL Meeting: Lexington, KY!**

### **Did you hear?**

Did you know that the next annual SEAALL meeting is in Lexington, Kentucky? The Bluegrass region of the Commonwealth of Kentucky has many wonderful attributes – world-class equine activities, top shelf bourbon, and genuine Bluegrass music just to name a few.

Never been to Kentucky? Welcome! Been to Kentucky before? Welcome back! April 16-18, 2015 is your opportunity to enjoy Kentucky’s rural beauty, friendly people, and warm hospitality.



## SEAALL Financial Report April 2013 through March 2014

<b>OPENING WORKING BALANCE</b>		<b>44,153.95</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
2014 SEAALL Annual Meeting		28,605.20
Sponsorships	10,725.00	
Registrations	17,880.20	
2013 SEAALL Annual Meeting		19,765.97
Membership Dues		11,150.00
Associate	180.00	
Individual	540.00	
Institutional	10,320.00	
Student	110.00	
Kathryn P. Mattox donation		1,500.00
Uncategorized Income		4,351.03
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>65,372.20</b>
<b>TOTAL WORKING BALANCE</b>		<b>109,526.15</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
SEAALL 2014 Annual meeting		1,760.64
Opening Reception	600.00	
Speaker Fees	250.00	
Ribbons and tote bags	910.64	
2015 SEAALL Annual Meeting		500.00
Opening Reception	500.00	
AALL 2013 Meeting		5,212.50
Reimbursements	437.34	
VIP guest expenses	92.28	
Hotel Expenses	4682.88	
Chapter Liability Insurance		655.00
Non-Profit Org. Annual Report		61.25
Transfer of Treasurer's Office		383.91
Tax Preparation		568.84
Refund for Overpayment of Dues		20.00
Reimbursements, General		157.40
Total Scholarships and Grants		14,515.72
SEAALL 2013 ANNUAL MEETING		39,032.27
Conference Hotel Expenses	28,279.69	
Conference Tote Bags	961.00	
Entertainment	1,200.00	
Friday Reception	8,071.23	
Service to SEAALL award	69.55	
Speaker Fee	450.80	
SEAALL Domain Name Fee		23.38
SEAALL Online Election Fee		377.80
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>63,268.71</b>
<b>CLOSING WORKING BALANCE</b>		<b>46,257.44</b>
<b>FIDELITY INVESTMENT</b>		<b>6,392.54</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>52,649.98</b>

# SEAALL Officers 2014 – 2015

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**SEAALL  
Southeastern Chapter  
American Association of Law Libraries**

**All y'all are cordially invited to the Fourth Annual**

**SEAALLSUCKER**

**Whether you were born in the South or simply got  
here as fast as you could, please join your fellow  
SEAALL colleagues in wearing your favorite  
seersucker to the...**

**2014 SEAALL Reception and Business Meeting  
AALL Annual Meeting & Conference  
San Antonio, TX**

**Who: SEAALL Members  
What: SEAALLSUCKER  
Where: San Antonio, TX  
When: 2014 SEAALL Reception  
Why: Celebrate Southern Sartorial Splendor  
How: With gentility, of course.**

# Submission Guidelines

The Southeastern Law Librarian (ISSN 0272-7560) is the official publication of the Southeastern Chapters of the American Association of Law Libraries. It is published quarterly and is distributed free to all SEAALL members. Editorial comments or submissions should be sent to:

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**Head of Public Services**  
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MS Word is the preferred format for electronic submissions.

Newsletter submission deadlines are:

Summer – August 31, 2014

Fall – November 30, 2014

Winter – February 28, 2014

Spring – May 31, 2015

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