AALL 2011 Local Arrangements Committee Annual Report

The 2011 Annual Meeting was held in Philadelphia July 23-26. The Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) consisted of two co-chairs—Merle J. Slyhoff, University of Pennsylvania, and Mark Bernstein, Drexel University—and 13 members. The LAC members served as chairs of 11 subcommittees, each subcommittee then having its own members.

The role of LAC is to promote the city in which the meeting is being held. Fortunately Philadelphia sells itself as a destination, and the LAC members could concentrate on promoting individual aspects of the city, such as dining venues, family activities, or local sites.

There were some changes to the activities of the LAC in 2011. The budget was eliminated for the Family Hour that traditionally brought together members bringing their families to AALL. The event included refreshments, some child-friendly activities, and occasionally some type of entertainment. With no budget, the committee pulled together an extensive list of family-based activities, including dining options, local and “further-afield” tourist attractions, and sports options. The list was on the LAC website in the form of a web-book to enable ease of printing for use in-hand while in Philadelphia.

With the ending of the Closing Banquet, there was no need for a subcommittee. Instead a Dine-Around subcommittee was created to offer choices to the membership on both Saturday, following the Exhibit Hall cutting/Opening Reception, and Tuesday, following the final programs of the day. While dine-arounds had previously been offered at Annual Meetings, they earned their right to become an official LAC subcommittee for the first time this year. The Dutch treat dinners were successful, and the membership had a number of cuisine options.

This year the Public Relations Committee’s responsibility was changed to include social media. The subcommittee overseeing social media not only prepared the in-print PR pieces but also oversaw the LAC website (hosted on WikiSpaces to accommodate ease of changes by a number of editors) and Twitter and Facebook posts both prior to and during the Annual Meeting. This allowed for the posting of reminders to attendees and for the posting of “right then” information, such as a new restaurant offering or a last minute get-together by a group of members.

From the traditional registration bag-stuffing on Friday of the Annual Meeting to the new dine-around on Tuesday evening, the LAC worked hard to provide our guests with a memorable and stress-free visit to Philadelphia. From the positive feedback we received, we feel that we were successful, despite the 100+ degree temperatures that greeted guests as they arrived on Friday and stayed with us through the close of the 2011 AALL Annual Meeting.

Merle J. Slyhoff and Mark Bernstein