Law Library Journal and AALL Spectrum Committee 2008-09

During 2008-09 several enhancements occurred, and the committee actively discussed issues that were presented. The committee began its year at the AALL Annual Meeting in Portland in July 2008. That meeting included a lengthy discussion on use of the AALL Universal Citation Guide (UCG) by the Law Library Journal, which likely will be an issue for the committee in 2009-10 as well since consensus was not reached. Some members thought that it would be more appropriate for LLJ to follow recognized citation formats, such as the Bluebook, so that AALL publication format would be similar to what the legal community is accustomed to seeing. That aspect was considered especially important for librarians whose tenure files are reviewed by law faculty. Others, especially those familiar with the long struggle to develop vendor neutral citations, thought AALL should retain UCG even if no other group embraced it.

A newly designed and updated web page was posted thanks largely to the work of member Jason Sowards. During the course of the year the committee discussed various matters via e-mail, including: developing a blog for Spectrum; placing Spectrum in the EBSCO database (approved); offering covers for reprints of Law Library Journal articles as is done for most law reviews (approved); creating a cumulative index for Law Library Journal (approved); asking whether awards should be given for articles that finish in the runner-up slot (no); providing corrected language for AALL web pages concerning awards for article of the year; deciding whether it is appropriate for the committee charge to indicate that no awards may be given (yes); assessed a new cover design for Law Library Journal, including an alternative layout of colors; and the committee’s role in providing input. The members of this year’s committee believed that LLJ and Spectrum would benefit from greater committee involvement in helping shape the publications’ future plans. Budget limitations have prevented mid-year meetings in Chicago as were held in the past. Electronic meetings may be an option to help provide feedback in the future.

The division of committee work into subcommittees included: LLJ Award – Joseph Custer, chair; Kumar Percy Jayasuriya; and Deborah Rusin; Spectrum Award – Therese Clarke Arado, chair; Merle Slyhoff; and Carol Billings; Web – Jason Sowards, chair; and Crata Castleberry.


A reception to honor the winners and all the authors was held at the AALL Annual Meeting in July 2008, thanks to the sponsorship of Wolters Kluwer Law & Business, who also will sponsor the event at the Washington Meeting.
John D. Edwards, chair
2008-09