The objectives of the Call for Papers Committee are: to promote scholarship by law librarians, other professionals and students with an interest in law libraries; to provide a creative outlet for law librarians and a forum for their scholarly activities; and to recognize the scholarly efforts of established members, new members and potential members of AALL.

The core event each year for this committee is the AALL/LexisNexis Call for Papers competition. Articles are solicited from competitors in each of three divisions: Open, New Members and Students. The three committee members carefully review each submission, with the goal of selecting a winning entry in each division. However, the committee can opt not to select a winning entry in a particular division if there are no submissions or articles are not deemed to be of prize-winning quality.

There were eight contestants in the 2008 Call for Papers competition. As always, the quality of the entries made for a fine competition, and the award winners should be duly proud of their accomplishment. Judith Lihosit won the Open Division for her article, “Research in the Wild: CALR and the Role of Informal Apprenticeship in Attorney Training.” There were co-winners in the New Member division. Julie Jones’ winning article is titled “Not Just Key Numbers and Keywords Anymore: How User Interface Affects Legal Research.” I-Wei Wang’s winning entry is titled “Schoolhouse Rock is No Longer Enough: The Presidential Signing Statements Controversy and its Implications for Library Professionals.” No award was given in the Student Division.

The winning authors will discuss their articles at the AALL Annual Meeting at a session titled “The Librarian as Author” on Sunday, July 13th at 3:00pm. The committee is pleased to announce that the keynote speaker at that event will be Michael Chiorazzi.

Committee members would probably agree that judging the submissions is a labor of love. Publicizing the competition and encouraging librarian-authors to write and submit articles are equally important. As in the past, the committee sent announcements to each AALL Special Interest Section, to all regional Chapters of AALL and to every library school. A short article describing Call for Papers was also sent to the Council of Newsletter Editors. This article was reprinted in many of the Chapter newsletters. An article congratulating this year’s winners was also sent to newsletters for publication.

For the first time last year, the Call for Papers Committee maintained an informational table at the CONELL Marketplace. Many newer librarians visited the table, and expressed interest in the competition.

The scarcity of submissions from students the past few years is a matter of some concern to the committee. In an effort to accommodate student submissions, the deadline for that division was extended an additional 45 days, to April 15. At our annual committee meeting in Portland, we will discuss the feasibility of moving that deadline back further for next year’s contest.
The committee has also informally discussed the possibility of sponsoring a librarian-authors roundtable at the AALL Annual Meeting, possibly organized along the lines of the very successful Legal Research Instruction Roundtable, which the ALL-SIS sponsors. The goal of such an event would be to match newer librarians, who may have questions about the writing-publishing process with more experienced authors. This possibility will also be explored further at the committee’s annual meeting.

The chair wishes to thank the members of this past year’s committee: James Heller (incoming chair) and James Donovan, as well as our Board Liaison, Lyonette Louise-Jacques. Mr. Heller and Mr. Donovan will continue as committee members for 2008-09. The chair would also like to welcome incoming member David Hollander.

Joseph L. Gerken, Chair
2007-08