At the 2008 Annual Meeting, the Economic Status of Law Librarians Committee is offering a follow-up to last year’s program on salaries. Titled “The AALL Salary Survey: What it Can – and Cannot – Do for You,” this year’s program will help members apply the information in the survey to their job. Peter Ronza, from the HR department of St. Thomas University and an independent HR consultant, is returning to provide insight.

The AALL Board charged the committee with compiling a comparable labor market list. After initial investigations, the committee determined it was not appropriate for the committee, or AALL, to make this determination. A proposal was sent to the Executive Board asking that a consultant be hired and that the Executive Director and Board were best positioned to determine an appropriate person. It was referred back to the committee for more consideration, at which time the chair recommended a name be put forth at the fall Board meeting, as that would best fit the timeline for the Finance and Budget committee. An outside consultant will be recommended. Determining a comparable labor market is crucial to understanding where our salaries should go in the future and this is an important first step in that process.

The committee was going to conduct an online forum to discuss the salary survey. However, given that the coming year will signal the start of the next survey cycle, it was determined that it would be premature to conduct the discussion. Since survey issues can change so dramatically, it was decided that asking members to participate in a salary survey discussion this year, and then to discuss it again next year might alienate some members. After meeting with Julia O’Donnell, the committee decided that late fall 2008 would be an opportune time to conduct an online forum. It will be recommended that an HR consultant preferably Peter Ronza, who has now worked with AALL on two programs and is aware of the issues concerning law librarians both in his capacity at St. Thomas and as an independent consultant, be allowed to monitor the forum.

A redesign of the Web page was launched with members searching for relevant articles and Web sites to include, and ideas for new format. This project will continue into the coming year.

This committee was in danger of being dissolved, and it was up to the committee last year and this year to prove that there was a continuing need for the committee. Having served as chair for the last two years, it is this chair’s recommendation that the Economic Status of Law Librarians Committee does have a place as a Standing Committee within AALL. AALL stands ready to serve an advocacy role in assisting its members in the area of salary compensation, by providing members relevant tools and information. The committee can serve a vital role in meeting this goal.

Merle J. Slyhoff, Chair
2007-08