During the July meeting, the committee learned that the Special Committee on Committee Structure recommended combining Membership and Retention with the Mentoring Committee to create the new Membership Development Committee, effective with appointments for 2008-09, and the AALL Board approved that recommendation. Committee members appointed beyond July 2008 will become members of the new merged committee.

The Membership and Retention Committee carried out two major projects this year: contacting lapsed members and coordinating membership development activities with AALL Chapters. Committee members worked hard to complete these projects in a timely fashion so that results could be reported back to Headquarters and other committees.

As has been the case for the past several years, committee members contacted “lapsed members,” those who did not renew their memberships over the summer. Hannah Phelps, AALL Membership Services Coordinator, provided names and contact information for these members. Committee members were assigned 20-30 members in their geographic regions to contact by e-mail with further follow-up done via telephone. As was true in previous years, many of the lapsed members had not updated their contact information. Therefore, committee members were encouraged to call a Chapter membership contact which might provide information about a former member who did not respond to an e-mail message or when the phone number proved incorrect.

The reasons for non-renewal of membership varied, but most were due to retirements or death, and some were due to economics, leaving the profession for other jobs in librarianship, lack of up to date contact information, or employer non-renewal. A few members indicated that they had either forgotten to renew and would do so, or thought that they had renewed. These individuals were encouraged to follow-up with their own institutions or with AALL Headquarters.

In the spring the committee chair and incoming co-chair Ellen Platt designed a Chapter survey to determine the scope of each Chapter’s membership, mentoring, and development efforts. Committee members called and e-mailed Chapter presidents or Chapter membership chairs and asked the following questions:

- What kind of membership retention efforts (mentoring, guidance, job info) do you currently undertake or provide?
- Do you need the AALL Membership Development Committee's assistance with your regional activities?
- Once the Membership Development Committee's Web site is up and running, may we place information there about a contact person from your chapter who would answer membership, mentoring, or other questions to provide guidance to younger members?
- Can AALL or the Membership Development Committee provide other related support or announcements to your Chapter (advertising opportunities such as training opportunities, how to become involved, how to become a chair or vice-chair (and what that commitment means), providing lists of opportunities for immediate involvement, personal narratives, etc.?

Survey responses for two-thirds of the Chapters were received and compiled and sent to the Special Committee on Developing Law Librarians for the Future and to the new co-chairs of the Membership Development Committee.

In addition, committee member Carla Evans volunteered to look into how other associations handle economic hardship in their dues structure. She compiled information from four other library associations, all of which offer a lower price for members with income under a certain level. Based on this information, the committee asked our Board Liaison to make a recommendation to the AALL Board to consider offering a discounted dues rate in upcoming years.

The chair would like to thank committee members DeDe Bradsher, Ellen Platt, Sue Johnson, Tom Duggan, Carla Evans, Nancy Thoms, Mark Schwartz, Penny Gibson, and Edward Hart for their hard work throughout the year. The chair would also like to thank Cornell Winston, our Executive Board Liaison and Hannah Phelps, our AALL Staff Liaison, for their useful knowledge and helpful insight.

Roberta (Bobbie) Studwell, Chair
2007-08