

### *Minnesota Association of Law Librarians 2006-07*

Last year, during the Minnesota Association of Law Librarians' (MALL) 50th year, it engaged in a strategic planning process and made a commitment to attract and bring in new members, make programming more dynamic, refresh the semi-annual Legal Research Institute, and be more collaborative with other "like" organizations in the community.

Towards that end, MALL reached out this year in collaboration with groups such as the Minnesota Library Association, SLA, the Minnesota Legal Marketing Administrators, and the Minnesota Association of Legal Administrators. MALL also participated in a library career fair for the MLS students at the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul and distributed a brochure entitled "Answers to Common Questions about Law Librarianship." MALL helped sponsor a local Freedom of Information Day event and some members initiated a way to support the Volunteer Lawyers Network by offering a pool of "on-call" librarians who could assist with legal research.

MALL sent several letters of support to local and state legal administrators. It was a voice in the community for the downtown Minneapolis library, which is facing cuts and shortened hours of operation. MALL advocated for legislative support for self-help centers in the courts to assist pro se patrons. News about this advocacy is referenced in the state court's 2007 *Report of the Statewide Law Library/Self-Help Project Advisory Workgroup*. The Community Outreach Committee updated MALL's *Legal Resources for Public Libraries* pages on the Web site. Members gave generously to a book drive to help the recovery effort in New Orleans.

MALL produced two new brochures this year in an effort to raise its profile in the legal and library community. One brochure describes MALL activities and outlines benefits of membership in the chapter. Another brochure, entitled *Five Reasons You Need a Law Librarian*, promotes the advantages of engaging a law librarian on staff. MALL members wrote informational articles for the newsletter about hot topics such as "E-Discovery" and discussions about library webOPAC design for the twenty-first century.

The MALL Education Committee sponsored two educational meetings and an all-day spring conference this year. Programs varied, but had a distinctly professional development flavor. A legal administrator taught members about negotiation skills. We were inspired by another speaker who once worked in our state's legislative library, but who is now a college professor. She challenged members to work on leadership skills and to be true to the work that is meaningful to them. At the Spring Conference, we were privileged to have the president-elect of the American Library Association, Dr. Lorie Roy, a Native American who grew up in Minnesota and is an advocate of indigenous librarians worldwide. From other professional speakers, members learned public speaking tips and were informed about steps to take to manage change, for themselves and those in their organizations. It was a well-attended and successful meeting.

MALL's nine-week Legal Research Institute was a great success as well. Evening classes were held every Tuesday evening from mid-February through mid-May. Basic legal research topics such as how to do a legislative history, utilizing secondary legal materials, and researching case law and federal administrative law were offered. A session on knowledge management and competitive intelligence was presented by local experts. A session entitled "Public Information You Thought Was Private" was popular, as were sessions on "Authenticating Electronic Information for Legal Research and Legal Proceedings" and "Technology and Ethics."

The MALL Newsletter Committee continued to provide members with six excellent newsletters, full of fun, colorful coverage of chapter activities. A new feature, "Teachable Moments" was added this year. Submissions to the newsletter and readership remain strong. The online *MALL Newsletter* represents the hub of the organization! Access it at MALL's Web page: <http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/mall/>.

MALL is sponsoring two VIP's to this year's AALL Annual Meeting. They are the Honorable Kevin S. Burke, Hennepin County District Court, and the Honorable John R. Rodenberg, Brown County District Court.

MALL's Awards, Grants and Scholarship Committee awarded six grants for a total of \$2880.00. MALL membership currently stands at 190. In 2006-07, MALL's Placement and Recruitment Committee posted eighteen professional employment opportunities; double that of the previous year. The Government Relations Committee kept members abreast of government actions that affect the library community. An Exchange Committee notified the membership about books available for sale (or for free) in the community. The Internet Applications Committee develops and maintains the MALL public Web site and MALL listserv. The Nominations Committee ran an electronic election again this year. An active Public Relations Committee assisted in the process of setting up displays for local events and the annual event in New Orleans as well as submitting news items and photos for nearly every issue of the AALL Spectrum. MALL's Membership Committee maintains an online version of the membership directory, a vital document for the chapter. The Publications Committee inventoried MALL publications, applied necessary updates, and created three new publications.

Five MALL librarians formed the first Law Librarians for Justice team and participated in a local Race for Justice, a 5K walk/run benefiting the Loan Repayment Assistance Program of Minnesota. A group of knitting enthusiasts met over lunch to exchange information, knitting tips, and gossip. The local "Downtowner's" group scheduled monthly noon-time brown bag sessions, including one on travel! A pet contest in the newsletter challenged MALL members to match owners with pictures of pets and was a great success.

Officers for 2006-07 were Hope Porter, President; Donna Trimble, Vice President/President-Elect; Vic Garces, Past President; Karla Gedell, Member at Large; and Susan Catterall, Secretary/Treasurer.

Hope Porter, President  
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