



The Reference Desk

President's Corner

I'm honored to write my first President's column for the MALL newsletter. Fall is a time to get back to regular schedules, prepare for the coming winter, and start planning for next year. The MALL Board is planning ahead for what we would like to accomplish this year and how we can best serve our members.

The first initiative is a revamp of the MALL website. We have a new Webmaster Chair, Jonathan Hein, who is working with a small committee to redesign and modernize the website. If you have any web design skills or an eye for fonts and colors reach out to Jonathan to volunteer.

The second initiative is for the Board to review our organizational documents. In the last few years we have had changes to committee structures and we would like our documents to reflect that. Passing on a complete handbook of the structure and function of committees will help future board members. If you would like to be part of this task force please contact Valerie Aggerbeck or myself.

Finally, Vice President Patrick Butler is planning our educational events for the coming year. If you have ideas for topics, or are interested in a short-term volunteer opportunity, please



reach out to him. Planning these events is a big task and having a small group to help makes a difference.

We need your help! As a MALL member we want your input and need your help in making an organization that works for our members. We have opportunities for small and large time commitments, no matter your position, there is a place for you in MALL.



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News

Here is your opportunity to get involved! MALL is seeking volunteers for the following positions. If you are interested helping out, please reach out to Patrick at pbutler@larkinhoffman.com

Registration is now open for the **SLA/MALL Annual Party**.

When: Friday, November 8th from 5:30-8:30 PM

Where: Urban Growler Brewing Co. 2325 Endicott Street Saint Paul, MN 55114

Cost: \$10 for MLIS Students / \$20 for SLA/MALL members / \$25 for non-members. This includes all food and soft drinks.

Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/slamall-annual-party-tickets-74191218933>



DOWNTOWNERS

UPDATE

CONTRIBUTED BY KALLIE WASS

Downtowners Update

The MALL Downtowners group met Thursday, October 3 at Winthrop and Weinstine to discuss conferences people had attended over the summer, to set an agenda for our next slate of meeting topics, and to begin a discussion on renaming the group.

AALL Recap

From the AALL conference in July, members had attended sessions on court analytics (D7), ROI (F4), internet archiving (D3), and Shon Hopwood's keynote all came recommended. These are each [available online on aallnet.org](http://aallnet.org) for [AALL members to watch](http://aallnet.org) – session numbers are noted above in parenthesis.

Downtowners History and Future

According to MALL's Bylaws, the Downtowners group has been meeting off-and on since 1974. Downtowners is in informal group of law librarians, not bound by type (firm, gov't, school, etc.), that meets semi-regularly to discuss topics of interest and generally kicking off the season with a conference review in the fall. In order to make the group more inclusive to anyone who would like to attend regardless of geography or type of institution, we are considering renaming the group. Name ideas include:

- [MALLtime](#)
- [MALLmeetups](#)
- [Cookies, Coffee, & Rumors](#)
- [The Group Formerly Known as Downtowners](#)

If you have other fabulous ideas, please submit to Chris Elkin and Kallie Wass. Keep your eye out for a poll that will be included in the next Downtowners email regarding the December meeting to cast a vote for your favorite.

Our next meeting will be **December 12 at [Maslon LLP](#)**. The topic of discussion will be library marketing and ROI. How do you use strategic storytelling to communicate the value of your group or department? Do you incorporate metrics or calculate your ROI in annual reporting? Are you looking for great ideas or have some to share? Please join us!

LEARN MORE

If you're interested in getting to know and learn from your fellow metro area law librarians, then Downtowners is the group for you! Please contact [Kallie Wass](#) (Gray Plant Mooty) or [Chris Elkin](#) (Winthrop & Weinstine) to learn more.

TAKIN' TEN WITH... STEPHANIE THORSON

MALL Featured Member Interview



Name:

Stephanie Thorson

Your current title:

Judicial Librarian Law Library Service to Prisoners

Who is your current employer? How long have you worked there?

State of Minnesota. 19 Years

What does a typical day look like for you and what are you currently working on?

I work in a position that is very unique. Law Library Service to Prisoners (LLSP) started in 1984 as an interagency agreement between the Minnesota Department of Corrections and The Minnesota State Law Library. Our service started as Minnesota's response to the landmark lawsuit *Bounds v. Smith* (430 U.S. 817). The general consensus after the case was that the incarcerated are entitled to information of a legal nature to assist them in following up on their individual cases and to ensure their rights. My typical day consists of answering inmate's legal questions. I am a librarian, not a lawyer. Generally, I provide information about their questions through statutes, law reviews, and court forms. They can ask their questions either at a monthly meeting at the prison, telephone, or through the mail. This job is very rewarding and

Join us as we get to know our colleagues through our "featured interview" segment. For each issue, we ask a randomly selected member a series of personal/professional questions. Their answers, along with a photo of their choosing, appear in the next newsletter. Stay tuned!

hectic. I like the pace, the challenges, and the work. I could have retired a few years ago. I like to keep learning.

What are some of the challenges/opportunities that you see in law libraries

The Minnesota State Law Library has started a program where a law librarian visits local libraries in St. Paul on certain days. They answer questions that the general public can ask. I believe that is a very good service because sometimes I think the general public are intimidated of law libraries.

Did you always know you wanted to be law librarian/work in legal research? If not, what did you do before and what inspired you to enter the field?

I knew I wanted to be a librarian. Books are my life. I love them. Work in legal research came next. I have also had an interest in prisons. I am so lucky to have been able to have been able to combine my two interests.

What advice do you have for folks who are going back to school for an advanced degree?

I am 72 years old. I raised my family first before I considered going to school. Once I started I kept going until I had a MLIS degree. My family encouraged me all the way. It is never too late to learn.

Tell us about your most recent "Eureka!!" moment. What cool new thing did you dis-

TAKIN' TEN WITH... STEPHANIE

MALL Featured Member Interview Continued...

cover/realize? How has that discovery/realization impacted your day to day?

Being the oldest daughter of four children I have always felt that I had to take the lead. In recent years I have discovered I do not have to be the leader of the band. I can sit back and watch the others make some of the decisions for the family.

What was your first job?

My first job was a babysitter. I watched five children under five for \$.35 an hour. I guess I was a responsible teenager. Sometimes their parents left for about six hours. When they arrived home I had all the children fed, bathed, and in bed. In the later years when I would see the Mother, she would always say I was the best babysitter they ever had. Now that I look at it after these years, \$.35 an hour seemed like good money for a young teenager in those days.



Apply now for Grants and Scholarships!

Grants

Grants to attend job-related, continuing education events and conferences can be applied for year round. If you're interested, please fill out the Grant Application Form on the MALL website, and submit it to Andrew Martineau at amartine@umn.edu. All we ask in return is that you write a brief article for the MALL newsletter sharing your experience at the event.

Applications for the AALL Annual Meeting must be submitted before April 10, 2020 at 5pm (CST). For all other events, you must submit an application at least 30 days before the event takes place.

You can find the details regarding eligibility requirements at <https://mall.wildapricot.org/page-1829077>.

Scholarships

If you are currently in a degree granting program related to law librarianship (including accredited JD programs, MLIS programs, and degrees related to computer technology) you may be eligible to receive a MALL scholarship. Please visit <https://mall.wildapricot.org/page-1829077> to view the full application and eligibility requirements.

Applications must be received by April 10, 2020 at 5pm (CST).



EDUCATION CORNER

CLE

Full MN CLE Live Seminar list [here](#)

CONFERENCES/WEBINARS

• SLA—[10 Essential Copyright Compliance Tips Every Info Pro Must Know](#) On-Demand Webinar (Free for members, \$19 for non-members)

•SLA—[The Secret Sauce: Where You're Probably NOT Looking to Find Your Client Intelligence Registration](#) 11/12/19, 2:00-3:00 PM. (non-member price \$99)

•National Institute of Corrections—[Data-Driven Librarianship in Corrections: Webinar Series](#) (Free) Previously recorded sessions.

•US Census Bureau—[Recent Updates to LODES and OnTheMap](#) (Free) 10/23/19, 1:30 –2:30 PM.

•Legal Marketing Association—[SEC Filings Introduction: No Math Required – How to Read Between the Numbers for Actionable Insights](#) (Free for members) 10/23/2019, 12:00-1:00 PM.

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Our mission is to facilitate the administration of and access to justice through the dissemination of legal information and through education of its members and the public.

