

# Southeastern Law Librarian

Winter 2013

[www.aallnet.org/chapter/seaall](http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/seaall)

Volume 38 Issue 1

## Presidential Ponderings

**SEAALL President**

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Finally a cold snap in North Florida: a whole weekend of near freezing temperatures in the mornings, but still warms up to mild 60s for the afternoon highs. It is fun watching Floridians bundle up yet persist in wearing their flip flops.

Congratulations to our incoming officers:

Fran Norton: Vice-President/President-Elect

Kate Irwin-Simler: Treasurer

Christine Sellers: Member-at-Large

Thanks to James Donovan, Kris Anne Tobin, and Donna Trimble for their preparedness to serve the chapter!

Pamela Melton has sent out her call for volunteers for 2013-14, please give serious thought about how you can help. It takes the efforts of us the members to make the chapter successful!

Registration is open for SEAALL 2013: Meeting in the Middle in Decatur, Georgia over the days 18-20 April. I look forward to seeing many of you there. Sarah Mauldin and her Local Arrangements Committee and Pamela Melton and the Program Committee are working hard to organize a successful meeting that supports your professional development and provides opportunities for networking.

For our annual meeting, we will be joined by Deborah L. Rusin, AALL Secretary, who will provide us an update on the goings on of our national association. Please join me in providing Debbie a warm Southern welcome.

As this is my last column as president, I want to say thank you to everyone who has made it a successful year. It has been my pleasure to serve as your president, and I feel confident that as I pass the gavel to Pamela, she will carry on the good work that has been the hallmark of SEAALL presidents.

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## Reader Feedback

If you have suggestions of articles or features you would like to see in the Southeastern Law Librarian please contact Brian Barnes, [bcbarnes@loyno.edu](mailto:bcbarnes@loyno.edu).

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# Why should I Meet in the Middle in Decatur for SEAALL 2013?

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Sarah K.C. Mauldin  
Director of Library Services  
Smith, Gabrell & Russell, LLP

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1. It's only a few miles from Downtown Atlanta, but has the charm of a small community.
2. You can get there from anywhere easily, including the Atlanta airport.
3. The great programs, including the annual Institute and programs of interest to members from any library type.
4. The fabulous keynote speakers, Gwen Spratt and Courtney Johnson.
5. The many excellent bars and restaurants just up the street from the hotel on the Square.
6. Networking with colleagues from around the Southeast.
7. The great reception at the historic Old Courthouse on the Square on Thursday evening.
8. Friday night dine arounds.
9. Amazing shopping opportunities at the many independent retailers within walking distance of the conference hotel, referred to locally as IndieCatur.
10. The opportunity to register for only the parts of the Meeting that work with your schedule.

You can find out more about the program at <http://law.gsu.edu/events/index/seaall2013/schedule> and get a detailed look with speaker listings at <http://law.gsu.edu/events/images/seaall2013/SEAALL2013Program02152013.pdf>.

You can register at <http://law.gsu.edu/events/index/seaall2013/register> and make your hotel arrangements at <http://law.gsu.edu/events/index/seaall2013/hotels> by March 19.

The entire conference experience can be had for only \$200 through the early bird deadline of March 15. The Thursday Institute is a separate registration of only \$75.

I hope to see a whole lot of SEAALL members Meet me in the Middle in my beautiful hometown April 18-20.



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## Law School or Not?: A Mid-Life Decision

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**Miriam Childs**  
**Head of Technical Services**  
**Law Library of Louisiana, Louisiana Supreme Court**  
**mchilds@lsac.org**

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The achievements of the new Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court, Bernette J. Johnson, have inspired me to the point of thinking about attending law school. Chief Justice Johnson was one of the first African Americans to attend LSU's Paul M. Hebert Law School. She later became the first woman elected to Orleans Civil District Court. Subsequently she was elected as an associate justice on the Louisiana Supreme Court, and has now become the head of the state's judiciary. Chief Justice Johnson's career is marked by advocacy on the behalf of the disadvantaged and underserved. These are but a few reasons why I find Chief Justice Johnson an inspirational figure.

I had considered attending law school briefly before I went to library school in the early 1990s. I was an undergraduate student worker at LSU Law School, so I had met the professors and the librarians. I remember one student I knew from the law school started her MLIS degree at the same time I did, the first person I met who went on to earn both degrees. Before I landed my first librarian position, I did a stint as a legal secretary. My exposure to legal resources as an undergraduate student helped me immensely as a legal secretary. I had worked with Westlaw (when it had the blue screen), had heard of LexisNexis, and could identify state statute and code books. Years after my legal secretary days, I began at the Law Library of Louisiana, where my student worker and legal secretary experience gave me a leg up on the legal materials I would first manage as a serials librarian, and later catalog them.

As I began to approach 10 years at the Law Library, I started wondering if my experience as a law librarian would help me if I enrolled in law school. Would it be helpful to already know how to search Westlaw and LexisNexis? Would I be able to ace exams because I can find my way in the state statutes? I've absorbed a lot about the state and national legal systems as well as legal bibliography and research. I would be at home in a law school's library, where most of my studying would presumably be done. I was starting to feel that all of this experience would make me an excellent law school student.

As I thought about the prospect of attending law school further, the practical side of things started taking the glow off of the fantasy. The first scary thought is cost. How much would I need to borrow (and pay back with interest) to make this happen? Next there's the time constraint to worry about. I could take evening law school classes offered by one of the local universities, but am I committed enough to this idea to work full time and take a class or two each semester until I fulfill the degree requirements? And finally there's my age. I'm in my mid-40s. It would be highly unlikely that I could practice law once I earned the J.D., times being what they are in the current legal marketplace. So I would remain a librarian, with no guarantee of receiving a pay raise as a result of earning the J.D. I would basically be going to law school just to go to law school and taking on new debt when I need to start preparing for retirement.

Still, I find it hard to ignore the spark of inspiration. Earning a J.D. is the first step towards becoming a judge, or even a justice. I suppose running for public office is its own Pandora's box, so maybe I'm better off just being inspired.

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# SEAALL Financial Report

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Period of June 1, 2012 - February 28, 2013

OPENING WORKING BALANCE		\$34,690.54
INCOME		
MEMBERSHIP DUES		\$10,000.00
Student	\$20.00	
Individual	\$20.00	
Institutional	\$9,280.00	
Associate	\$680.00	
MATTOX SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS		\$1,500.00
TOTAL INCOME		\$11,500.00
TOTAL WORKING BALANCE		\$46,190.64
EXPENSES		
LIABILITY INSURANCE		\$531.00
BANK SERVICE CHARGE		\$33.00
FEE FOR TAX RETURN PREPARATION		\$535.00
REFUND FOR OVERPAYMENT OF DUES		\$40.00
NON-PROFIT ORG. REPORT FEE		\$61.25
STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS		\$9,000.00
Student Scholarships	\$9,000.00	
AALL 2012 ANNUAL MEETING		\$8,699.91
Handouts for SEAALL table	\$918.75	
SEAALL VIP travel expenses	\$1,564.72	
Supplies for SEAALL table	\$16.78	
SEAALL reception and meeting	\$6,199.66	
SEAALL 2012 ANNUAL MEETING		\$1,000.00
CASA charitable donation	\$1,000.00	
SEAALL 2013 ANNUAL MEETING		\$150.00
Fee for logo design	\$150.00	
ELECTIONS		\$367.20
Online election fee	\$367.20	
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$20,356.11
CLOSING WORKING BALANCE		\$24,974.53
INVESTMENTS		\$6,392.54
Fidelity Investments	\$6,392.54	
INVESTMENTS AS OF JANUARY 31, 2013		\$6,392.54
TOTAL ASSETS		\$31,367.07

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# SEAALL Placement Opportunities

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Reference Librarian (Weekend)

**Florida A&M University**

Orlando, FL

Contact: Adrienne S. Snyder (407-254-3217)

Deadline: March 14, 2013

[http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/seaall/documents/employment/FAMU\\_Reference\\_Librarian\\_Weekend.pdf](http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/seaall/documents/employment/FAMU_Reference_Librarian_Weekend.pdf)

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Research Services Librarian / Lecturer in Law

**Vanderbilt University**

Nashville, TN

Contact: (not specified)

Deadline: Application review begins March 22, 2013

[http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/seaall/documents/employment/Research\\_Services\\_Librarian\\_Vanderbilt.pdf](http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/seaall/documents/employment/Research_Services_Librarian_Vanderbilt.pdf)

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Evening Weekend Reference Librarian

**Elon University**

Greensboro, NC

Contact: (not specified)

Deadline: Application review begins March 8, 2013

[http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/seaall/documents/employment/Elon\\_Evening\\_Weekend\\_Reference\\_March\\_2013.pdf](http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/seaall/documents/employment/Elon_Evening_Weekend_Reference_March_2013.pdf)

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Law Librarian

**Faulkner University**

Montgomery, AL

Contact: Robb Farmer ([rfarmer@faulkner.edu](mailto:rfarmer@faulkner.edu))

Deadline: (not specified)

[http://www.faulkner.edu/SharedMedia/\\_aboutFaulkner/LawLibrarian121030.pdf](http://www.faulkner.edu/SharedMedia/_aboutFaulkner/LawLibrarian121030.pdf)

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Associate Dean for the Law Library and ITS

**Charlotte School of Law**

Charlotte, NC

Contact: (not specified)

Deadline: (not specified)

[http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/seaall/documents/employment/2012\\_Charlotte\\_Associate\\_Dean.pdf](http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/seaall/documents/employment/2012_Charlotte_Associate_Dean.pdf)

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# SEAALL Library Profile

## Mississippi College School of Law

Information by Stephen Parks, Layout by Brian Barnes



The Mississippi College School of Law was founded in 1930 as the Jackson School of Law. In 1975, Mississippi College acquired the law school. Located in the capital city of Jackson, the law school is close to the legal, business, and state government communities which provide numerous opportunities for its law students. This central location also allows the Mississippi College Law Library the opportunity to play an integral role in assisting not only those in the legal community but those in the general public as well.

The primary focus of the Law Library is the school's faculty and students. Serving over twenty-five full time

faculty members and over five hundred students, the Law Library's staff of five full time professional librarians and three support staff members strive to provide top-notch services. Library services include the teaching of all first year classes on Legal Research, class room support for faculty members, lunch and learn programs for students and faculty, and usual library services such as interlibrary loans and circulation.

As many legal items have transitioned to an electronic format, library usage by members of the state bar has decreased over the past few years. However, the Library does provide reference services and routinely provides CLE instruction to judicial clerks and state judges, among other groups.

The Library has seen construction over the past few years. In the fall of 2010, nine glass-enclosed study rooms were installed to provide extra study space for students. The new rooms have been heavily used, and students have voiced great appreciation for the addition. The Library installed a coffee shop in the summer of 2011 which provides snack items, coffee drinks, and a television. This extra study space provides a relaxing atmosphere where students may gather to study or simply take a break.

The Library has taken upon itself the task of being an unofficial archive of state government information as part of its service to the legal community. The Library's Judicial Data Project, introduced in 2010, archives appellate briefs and video of appellate oral arguments. It also compiles statistical data on Mississippi appellate cases. The Library was awarded the 2012 Innovation in Technology Award for its work on the Judicial Data Project at the 2012 AALL Annual Meeting in Boston. Beginning in January 2013,



*Continued on next page*



the Library, building upon the success of the Judicial Data Project, introduced the Legislative History Project which provides video of floor debate in the Mississippi House of Representatives and Mississippi Senate. The Mississippi Legislature does not archive its floor proceedings, and the Law Library has created the Legislative History Project in an effort to provide for free the legislative history of the many bills passed by the state legislature.

For more information about the Mississippi College Law Library, please see [law.mc.edu/library](http://law.mc.edu/library). To view the Judicial Data Project, please see [judicial.mc.edu](http://judicial.mc.edu). To view the Legislative History Project, please see [law.mc.edu/legislature](http://law.mc.edu/legislature).

**Have an idea to share?**

**Need publications to help with achieving  
promotion or tenure?**

**Want to promote a project you have done at  
your library?**

**Become an author in the Southeastern  
Law Librarian !!!**

Contact Brian Barnes, [bcbarnes@loyno.edu](mailto:bcbarnes@loyno.edu).



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# Expect the Unexpected

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**Brian Barnes**

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Everyone who will read this should be able to identify with the statement “expect the unexpected”. In law libraries that statement rings just as true today as when Heraclitus allegedly said it some 2500 years ago. The question then for this editorial is what the heck to do with this truism as we proceed in our daily work lives and seek to make our libraries a better place to work and more responsive to our users needs.

In expecting the unexpected the first step should be awareness. As busy as most librarians are each day we should all build in a specific time for reflection and observation. Whether this is simply looking at your calendar each morning and arranging tasks in your head or undergoing a zen-like meditation this time is crucial. Being aware of what might be on the horizon or picking up hints that might indicate the need for future action can really help take the “sting” out of unexpected.

Another great step in expecting the unexpected is preparation. A basic example of preparation is the creation of manuals that can be implemented in cases of the unexpected. Two of my personal favorite preparation tools are disaster plans (a need for hurricane or flood preparation that can influence SEAALL members more than anywhere else in the country) and “run over by the bus” scenarios. The idea behind this second preparation is that any librarian can step in for another who is run over by a bus without dramatic fall-off in services. In the past two years I’ve seen this go into place for people out with emergency hospital stays and abrupt retirements.

Another action that can go a long way in expecting the unexpected is confidence. This might be a bit of a stretch but having confidence that you can deal with the unexpected when it happens can go a long way towards success. If you portray that everything is fine and under control others will believe it as well. To steal from another motivational quotation “it is not what happens to you, but how you react to it”. Take the unexpected, have confidence in your training and the tools at your disposal, and do the best you can. A quick tip on gaining some confidence is to lean on your contacts that can mentor you through an unexpected situation. They’ve done it before; in using their experience your task can be easier and you can also steal some of their confidence that comes with experience.

A final tip for expecting the unexpected is to acknowledge results when they occur. Similar to awareness but better characterized as learning from the experience (therefore it should be less unexpected next time). If the unexpected situation ended up really well, make sure to reward yourself to reinforce the system. If the unexpected did not do so well be aware and acknowledge the process and save yourself time next time it occurs courtesy of the newly supplemented tool of experience.

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# Submission Guidelines

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The Southeastern Law Librarian (ISSN 0272-7560) is the official publication of the Southeastern Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries. It is published quarterly and is distributed free to all SEAALL members. Editorial comments or submissions should be sent to:

Brian C. Barnes -- Deputy Law Library Director -- Loyola New Orleans -- [bcbarnes@loyno.edu](mailto:bcbarnes@loyno.edu)

Submissions are preferred to be sent electronically in MS Word format.

**Newsletter Deadlines are:**

**Spring -- May 31, 2012**

**Summer -- August 31, 2012**

**Fall -- November 30, 2012**

**Winter -- February 28, 2013**

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