



MAALL Markings

Mid-America Association of Law Libraries

Volume 31, Issue 2

March 2022

MAALL.newsletter@gmail.com

MANAGER TO MANAGER: TIPS TO KEEP YOU SANE AND EFFECTIVE

Gail Wechsler, Library Director, Law Library Association of St. Louis (gwechsler@llastl.org)

THE IMPORTANCE OF GRATITUDE

Perhaps I should be writing this column around Thanksgiving or the December holidays. But I chose a different time of year to emphasize that expressing gratitude to your staff should be a year-round activity.

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The Why of Expressing Gratitude:

In a prior column I talked about the fact that over half of employees leave jobs due to a bad manager. A corollary of that is that when you tell staff members you appreciate them, it provides an important morale boost. Often our libraries are running with not enough staff people and too many things to do. We work in a people-driven profession, where many times we are responding to students, faculty, attorneys and members of the public, all of whom can occasionally be impatient, frustrated or otherwise difficult. And let's face it - we are not making the big bucks, indicating that many of us are in this profession for its psychic, not monetary, rewards. All of these factors make it wise to focus on providing positive feedback when employees engage in a job well done.

The How of Expressing Gratitude:

There are as many ways to express gratitude as there are managers. Gratitude can be as simple as sending an email to a staff member telling them "You did a great job on that project!" While you may not

want to overdo it and profusely thank a staff person for everything they do, expressing gratitude through a conversation, email or text costs nothing and can help a harried library employee feel better.

Gratitude can be expressed to your staff as a whole on certain occasions. Has the library made it through a difficult renovation project or a migration to a new catalog/ILS? Doubtless everyone on your staff was involved to some degree. All should be thanked for putting in the extra effort to make a large project succeed.

Depending on the financial resources of your library, rewards in the form of a gift also can make a difference. I typically provide store gift cards at holiday time to the staff members who work for me. The amount is not large, but the sentiment is. Looking at things from an employee's point of view, I remember a few occasions when an employer provided me with a small gift card to a local bookstore or a local restaurant. Perhaps this made me happy because it was unexpected or because I was dealing with some other issues in my life at the time and needed a boost. But I also think it was the fact that my employer was telling me: "I appreciate you. I know you have a hard job."

In a pre-pandemic world, an occasional lunch out or catered lunch was a good way to show gratitude. Consider that gesture once it is safe again to do so.

Finally, expressing gratitude also makes you feel good. When you realize that you have library staff who are working day in and day out to meet your library's mission, telling them so is very powerful both to them and to you.

Many quotes exist about gratitude. Here's one I like from Amy Collette: "Gratitude is a powerful catalyst for happiness. It's the spark that lights the fire of joy in your soul."

AFFIRMATIONS

Autumn Collier, Research Librarian, Littler Mendelson P.C. (acollier@littler.com) & Jill Kilgore, Research Librarian, Littler Mendelson P.C. (jilkilgore@littler.com)

JOIN THE BLOG PARTY

We inventoried a selection of our favorite professional development blogs to bring you insights from some of the leaders in the field. The blogs address topics facing law librarians and information professionals today as they relate to vendors, innovation and technology, the business of law, knowledge management, and more. Take a moment to hear from your colleagues. Use their wisdom to energize your relationship with work and affirm your connection to lifelong learning and growth.



Photo by [Startup Stock Photos](#) from [Pexels](#)

General Reads

[2Civility](#) – A legal blog providing lawyers, judges, and other legal professionals with the news they need to build an innovative career based on integrity, professionalism, and civility.

[3 Geeks and a Law Blog](#) – A legal blog about the administrative side of large law firm environments.

[ACRLog](#) – Reflections and topical commentary concerning the issues facing academic and research librarians.

[Artificial Lawyer](#) – All about the business of law and the deployment of technology in the profession.

[CRIV Blog](#) – Blog by AALL’s Committee on Relations with Information Vendors (CRIV) focusing on relationships between librarians and vendors.

[Dewey B Strategic](#) – Created by Jean O’Grady, Dewey B Strategic provides updates on the legal vendor products we use in our workday.

[LawSites](#) – Robert Ambrogi’s blog on legal technology and innovation.

[Library Boy](#) – Canadian law librarian providing legal research news, links to library journals, and perspectives on the profession.

[On Firmer Ground](#) – This blog is part of AALL’s Private Law Librarians & Information Professionals Special Interest Section (PLL-SIS). Written by law firm librarians to share information on adopting innovative practices, leveraging technology, and being effective information specialists.

[Real KM](#) – Articles on current issues surrounding the Knowledge Management field.

[RIPS Law Librarian Blog](#) – From AALL’s Research, Instruction, and Patron Services Special Interest Section (RIPS-SIS), this blog covers trends in academia and patron services.

[Slaw](#) – Canada’s online legal magazine providing commentary on cases and current legal topics.

Recent & Noteworthy

[Is a Misinterpretation of “Professionalism” Being Used to Exclude Attorneys?](#) – In this article, Kendra Abercrombie, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Manager at the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism, explores professionalism—how we define, characterize, and visualize it in our lives—and how its misinterpretation can be used as an exclusionary tool.

[Skidmore LibGuide to Adulthood](#) – Resources for the wobbly journey of adulthood.

[Law Schools Must Do More to Retain First-Generation Students](#) – William & Mary Law School Dean A. Benjamin Spencer and second-year law student Charleigh Kondas call for law schools to improve their efforts to mentor and engage first-generation law students, and describe the school’s work to create their affinity group, the First Generation Student Alliance.

MAALL BOOK TO ACTION BOOK DRIVE A SUCCESS

Gail Wechsler, Library Director, Law Library Association of St. Louis, and MAALL Book to Action Co-Coordinator (gwechsler@llastl.org)

Since 2015, MAALL has included the Book to Action charitable drive as part of the Fall Annual Meeting. Book to Action was the brainchild of MAALL member Cindy Bassett. Cindy created the program in response to a suggestion from the 2014 MAALL Annual Meeting keynote speaker, Steve Bogira, that law librarians could help those in prison by providing books to them. Since then, our members have been donating books to selected non-profit organizations yearly. Typically, Cindy and I select a non-profit that is “local” to the site of the Annual Meeting.



Photo by Susan deMaine

Shifting to a virtual format for the Annual Meeting in 2021, while challenging, did not deter the effort by Cindy and me to find a worthy non-profit to help. We selected Family Development Services, which runs the Indianapolis Head Start program. We also enlisted MAALL member extraordinaire, Susan deMaine, to help with pick-up and delivery of the books, as Cindy and I were no longer expected to be in Indy for the (now virtual) conference.

A newer component of Book to Action involves supporting a local bookstore as part of the project. This past year we selected KidsInk, a local independent children's bookstore in Indianapolis. The bookstore owner, Shirley Mullin, not only created a special link for donations to MAALL Book to Action on the bookstore home page, but also donated part of the proceeds from sale of the books to Family Development Services. We are grateful for her participation.

Whether providing books to prisoners, to those in the foster care system, or to young children served by Head Start, Book to Action really makes a difference. Cindy and I thank all of the MAALL members who purchased books for this worthy cause. Stay tuned for information on the charity and bookstore selected for the 2022 Annual Meeting.

DAZED & INSTRUCTED

Matt Timko, Academic Technologies & Outreach Services Librarian and Assistant Professor, Northern Illinois University College of Law, (mtimko@niu.edu)

MISTAKES

It is an old and established maxim in work, school, and life: mistakes happen. We all make mistakes — some big and some small — but the key is to learn from your mistakes. Yet, there is an aura in legal academia that professors and instructors are and should be perfect. I admit that I even find myself falling into this line of thinking. When I make mistakes I feel overly embarrassed and beat myself up for not being perfect. Then, later in the day, I will go to my research class and let my students know that it is okay to make mistakes, as long as they learn from them. Why can I not apply the same principle to myself? Am I a hypocrite? What is the best way to “normalize” mistake-making?

The concern is not my own well-being, but the students'. Research is a process-based practice, and there are several different ways to get results, which will invariably change due to the presented facts, the secondary sources and finding aids available, and the existence of any case law. With so many moving parts, it is impossible to tell students "do it this way." Due to this reality, research is often best learned by trial and error. In any given research scenario, the process is driven by the answers to several questions: what resources can I find, which do I like, and how can I utilize them effectively? Therefore, mistakes are integral to the research process, both for beginners and experts.

This is even more true with citations, when students are first starting to learn how to build them. While most students have had some form of citation education, legal citation (and *The Bluebook* specifically) is an entirely different animal. There are so many disparate elements that students need to keep track of, in addition to the substantive legal information. It can be even harder to keep track of these elements when using legal databases. It can be difficult to distinguish different internet tabs, as opposed to different physical books, for example. And with everything looking aesthetically the same (except for Westlaw being blue and Lexis being red), it is not surprising that students will make mistakes or get confused. The key is baking that into the process.

Just as there is no “right way” to do research, there is also no right way to help students accept mistakes and to correct them. One method I have tried is not to “hide the ball.” This process is difficult! To pretend otherwise is doing a disservice. Unfortunately, when students (especially 1L students) have so many subjects and legal research is often a non-credit-bearing or low credit hour course, it is hard for students not to devalue it and it is thus perfectly understandable when students check out. By identifying the course as difficult, and that we will work through it together, the students (hopefully) understand that there is a support structure which will invariably be there to help correct mistakes.

Similarly, I assign pass/fail exercises which require the students to complete the assignment, but where mistakes are not penalized. This not only provides students with valuable research experience, but also me, as the instructor, with a form of assessment. I can then reach out if there are especially egregious mistakes that need to be corrected. These ungraded assignments also keep students engaged with the material in a low stress setting. Lastly, I share my own struggles with learning legal research in law school. Seeing professors as human helps diminish the aura of perfection which creates undue stress on students and instructors alike.



Illustration by Brent Greyson

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Rena Seidler, Research and Instruction Librarian, Ruth Lilly Law Library, Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law (rstoeber@iupui.edu)

Friends, Midwesterners, countrymen, lend me your ears!

The time for presentation proposals for the annual MAALL Conference is nearly upon us. Fingers crossed and all available wood knocked-on that we shall return to a live conference in 2023, but this fall, we will once again delve into the world of virtual conferencing. Rather than dwell on our missed opportunities to connect in-person in recent years, I suggest taking some time to dust off some of those esoteric proposal ideas you may have put on a shelf in the back of your mind over the years and consider collaboration for this year's conference.

In my time on the MAALL executive board as a Member-at-Large and as Vice President, as well as my two

(admittedly failed) runs on the Local Arrangements Committee for conferences that COVID co-opted, I have seen our strength and determination to continue to grow our relationships and collaborate despite the imposed distances between us. As we look toward what will hopefully be our last virtual conference for the foreseeable future, I hope to see a plethora of cooperative proposals between our member libraries (not to dissuade individual or inter-library proposals, of course).

This year, we are not bound by the limitations of the unknown: Will we meet in-person? Won't we? Do I need library funding to get to a conference?

Law librarians have the unique adaptability to take unexpected technologies and embrace them, which we have shown time and time again as Zoom, Kaltura and other virtual meeting, teaching, and editing platforms have become a part of our daily lives over the past two years. So this year, let's embrace that adaptability and create our most innovative and exciting virtual proposals to date. In the virtual world, not even the sky is the limit; you have the universe (and the restaurant at the end of it) at your fingertips.

The Education Committee will be in touch soon with this year's conference theme, as well as information on proposal submission guidelines. I truly am excited about the upcoming conference and about the opportunity to helm a conference that I anticipate being like no other. Let's have some fun this year!

And finally, a big thanks to the Education Committee for adapting to our virtual reality. Kudos to Therese Clarke Arado, Lynn Hartke, Jackie McCloud, and Chelsey McKimmy for joining me in this adventure.

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

Introducing "Will" the New Markings Mascot



Photo by Sarah Kammer

Spring is upon us, and like our venerable Marbury and Madison, we are all coming out of our winter hibernation. A new character has been spotted emerging from the MAALL prairie dog town - donning his ruff and beret, he always leaves a trail of ink and bits of paper behind him, and his staccato call sounds strikingly iambic. Meet "Will," the new *Markings* mascot, who is here to inspire you to pick up your own quill and to submit your writing for *Markings*. [After all, prairie dogs have one of the most advanced languages of the animal kingdom!](#)

Amongst Will's many papers and musings, we have decoded his list of Top 5 reasons to write an article for *Markings* in 2022:

1. It's a great way to share your expertise with your colleagues. Everyone in the organization can benefit from learning from you.
2. It's easy! Just email your piece to maall.newsletter@gmail.com. The deadline is one month prior to the publication date (i.e. May 15 for the June 15 issue).

3. It's fun! Taking a few moments out of your day to craft a couple sentences or paragraphs is an enjoyable, creative release from the day-to-day duties of librarian life.
4. *Markings* is a welcoming and supportive forum to make a writing debut. If you've never submitted a piece of writing before, consider starting with a short *Markings* article. Even if it's not 100% formed or polished, the *Markings* editors will work with you to finalize the piece.
5. Every new contributor to *Markings* offers a unique viewpoint, enhancing the diverse array of perspectives presented in the official chapter publication.

We hope Will's encouragement has inspired you to come out in the yard and to get on your "bard"!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Christopher Steadham, Director, Wheat Law Library, University of Kansas School of Law (csteadham@ku.edu)

Despite winter's insistence on delivering one or two last rounds of snow and frigid temperatures to much of MAALL country, spring is upon us. Clocks are springing forward. For those of us in academic libraries, spring break offers a much needed respite. Or, if you are like me, it is a chance to at least try to get caught up on a million or more things.

Spring also means that the MAALL membership renewal process is underway, so don't forget to renew that membership for your library (and a big thank you to those who already have). It also means that planning is underway for the 2022 annual meeting this fall. As Vice President Rena Seidler notes in her message, the meeting will again be virtual this year. With Rena at the helm of an enthusiastic Education Committee, we are excited to once again marshal the expertise of the MAALL membership for another fantastic conference. Stay tuned for more info coming soon and I encourage you to consider sharing your insights through a program proposal.

Numerous other recent MAALL happenings merit highlighting as well. For example, Indiana recently passed the Uniform Electronic Legal Materials Act (UELMA). Ben Keele, chair of the UELMA Task Force, advocated for the legislation and deserves recognition for his successful efforts on this front. We are still seeking additional volunteers to round out the Task Force, especially from MAALL members in states that have not yet enacted UELMA, so please reach out if you are interested in following Ben's lead on this important issue. Additional kudos are also due for Cindy Bassett, who recently graduated from the University of Missouri School of Law. Completing law school while holding her position of Collection Management & Electronic Services Librarian at MU and being an all-around MAALL all-star, is no small feat. Congratulations, Cindy!

Many other MAALL activities and initiatives will be moving forward in the coming weeks and months. Thank you to all of the committee volunteers and chairs. There are still a few spots we are looking to round out, so please reach out if you have any interest in joining a committee and contributing to that important work! Committee chairs, we will be working with you to ensure you have what you need to accomplish your goals this year, and I encourage you to reach out at any point if I can support your efforts. Finally, I should note that the Nominations Committee is currently soliciting nominations for Vice President/President-Elect, Secretary,

and Member-at-Large positions. MAALL members, I encourage you to consider throwing your hat in the ring – I can assure you the MAALL Board is just about the best group of folks you could ever ask to work with. Happy spring everyone and please stay in touch as we move forward!

STATE MEMBER NEWS

University of Nebraska, Schmid Law Library

Rich Leiter was appointed by Hugh Halperin, the Director of the GPO, to serve on a Task Force on a Digital Federal Depository Library Program. The charge of the Task Force is to investigate the feasibility of an all-digital FDLP. The final report is due this fall. Leiter was also appointed to lead a Working Group that will investigate the impact on the GPO of such a move to an all-digital program.



Northern Illinois University, David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library

The Northern Illinois University, David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library is thrilled to welcome a new librarian. Rachel Ford, who started on January 4, 2022, is the Resources Management Librarian. She most recently held the position of Electronic Resources Librarian at Aurora University.

Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law, Ruth Lilly Law Library

Jackie McCloud has joined the Ruth Lilly Law Library at the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law as a Research and Instructional Services Librarian. She received a J.D. from the University of Akron School of Law and an M.L.I.S. and B.A. from Kent State University. Prior to joining the law library, she was a Digital Content Specialist for OverDrive, Inc. in Ohio. Her past academic appointments include serving as the Head of Electronic Resources and Computer Services at the University of Iowa Law Library and as the Digital Content Services/Reference Librarian at the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law Library.



To all our other members:

We hope no news is good news! Please let us know of any future news items at <https://forms.gle/aSR9Ru6JVX7SjExx7!>

MAALL MARKINGS INFORMATION

MAALL Markings is published four times a year by the Mid-America Association of Law Libraries, a chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries, and is a benefit of membership. The purpose of MAALL Markings is to publish news of the Chapter, selected news of AALL and other professional associations, and MAALL members, as well as to solicit and publish articles to add to the body of literature in the profession of law librarianship. All articles are copyrighted and any republication or use of any portion of the content for any purpose must have written permission from the author/s.

Publication Schedule: Issues are published in March, June, September, and December.

Submission deadlines for each issue are:

December (No. 1): November 15

March (No. 2): February 15

June (No. 3): May 15

September (No. 4): August 15

Editor-in-Chief: Therese Clarke Arado

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LINKS TO AALL CHAPTER & SIS PUBLICATIONS

Links originally compiled by Lindsey Carpino for the CALL Bulletin and reprinted with permission. *MAALL Markings* updates links on a yearly basis. The original post is available at <http://bulletin.chicagolawlib.org/2016/05/aall-chapter-sis-publications/>.

AALL Chapter	Chapter Links/Newsletter	Blog
Arizona Association of Law Libraries (AZALL)		AzALL Member Blog
Association of Law Libraries of Upstate New York (ALLUNY)	ALLUNY Website	
Atlanta Law Libraries Association (ALLA)	ALLA News	
Chicago Association of Law Libraries (CALL)	CALL Bulletin	
Dallas Association of Law Librarians (DALL)		Lex Scripta
Greater Philadelphia Law Library Association (GPLLA)	GPLLA News	
Houston Area Law Librarians (HALL)	HALL Quarterly	
Law Librarians Association of Wisconsin, Inc. (LLAW)	LLAW Briefs	
Law Librarians of New England (LLNE)		
Law Librarians of Puget Sound (LLOPS)		LLOPS Cited
Law Librarians Society of Washington, D.C., Inc. (LLSDC)	Law Library Lights	
Law Libraries Association of Alabama (LLAA)		LLAA Blog
Law Library Association of Greater New York (LLAGNY)	Law Lines	
Law Library Association of Maryland (LLAM)	LLAM Newsletter	
Michigan Association of Law Libraries (MichALL)	MichALL Website	
Mid-America Association of Law Libraries (MAALL)	MAALL Markings	
Minnesota Association of Law Libraries (MALL)		MALL News Blog
New Jersey Law Librarians Association (NJLLA)		NJLLA Blog
New Orleans Association of Law Librarians (NOALL)	NOALL Website	
Northern California Association of Law Libraries (NOCALL)	NOCALL News	
Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries (ORALL)	ORALL Newsletter	
San Diego Area Law Libraries	SANDALL Newsletter	
Southeastern Chapter of the Amer. Assn. of Law Libraries (SEAALL)	SEAALL Website	
Southern California Association of Law Libraries (SCALL)	SCALL Newsletter	
Southern New England Law Librarians Association (SNELLA)	Obiter Dicta	
Southwestern Association of Law Libraries (SWALL)	SWALL Website	
Virginia Association of Law Libraries (VALL)	VALL Newsletter	VALL Talk
Western Pacific Chpr. of the Amer. Assn. of Law Libraries (WestPac)	WestPac Website	
Western Pennsylvania Law Library Association (WPLLA)	WPLLA Website	
AALL SIS	SIS Links/Newsletter	SIS Blog
Academic Law Libraries SIS (ALL-SIS)	ALL-SIS Website	What's New
Computing Services SIS (CS-SIS)	CS-SIS Website	CS-SIS Blog
Digitization and Educational Technology SIS (DET-SIS)	DET-SIS Website	
Foreign, Comparative & International Law SIS (FCIL-SIS)	FCIL-SIS Website	DipLawMatic Dialogues Blog
Government Documents SIS (GD-SIS)	JURISDOCS	
Government Law Libraries SIS (GLL-SIS)	GLL-SIS Website	
Legal History & Rare Books SIS (LH&RB-SIS)	LH&RB Newsletter	
Legal Information Services to the Public SIS (LISP-SIS)	LISP-SIS Website	
Online Bibliographic Services SIS (OBS-SIS)	OBS-SIS Website	TSLL TechScans Blog
Private Law Librarians & Information Professionals SIS (PLLIP-SIS)	PLLIP E-Newsletter	On Firmer Ground
Professional Engagement, Growth, and Advancement SIS (PEGA-SIS)	PEGA-SIS Website	
Research Instruction & Patron Services SIS (RIPS-SIS)	RIPS-SIS Website	RIPS Law Librarian Blog
Social Responsibilities SIS (SR-SIS)	SR-SIS Website	
Technical Services SIS (TS-SIS)	TS-SIS Website	TSLL TechScans Blog

2021/2022 MAALL Executive Board

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& Colleen Williams

Vision Planning Task Force

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Members: Joseph Custer, Allison Reeve Davis,
Hans Herzl-Betz & Heidi Kuehl

Website Committee

Co-Chairs: Pam Crawford & Jonathan Hein
Members: Creighton Miller & Colleen Williams

***positions not set at the time of publication**

There are a number of opportunities available to serve MAALL. Please contact Christopher Steadham at csteadham@ku.edu if you would like to serve on a task force or committee.