

wplla NEWSLETTER

A Publication of the Western Pennsylvania Law Library Association

A Column of Content



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Editor's Note

First, I would like to give a huge thank you to anyone who assisted in compiling, drafting, and proofreading content for this first issue back from an extended hiatus. I am excited for our WPLLA group to be more active - engaging with each other *and* within the greater AALL community. WPLLA will be celebrating **48** years in 2025!

With the revival of the WPLLA Newsletter, I hope we can foster a sense of camaraderie and connection. In each issue there will be a highlight of recent events, AALL forum spotlights, general member information, industry trends, career development topics, and more. The intention is for this to be a quarterly running periodical. If any members have a suggestion for the newsletter feel free to send an email to a newsletter committee member.

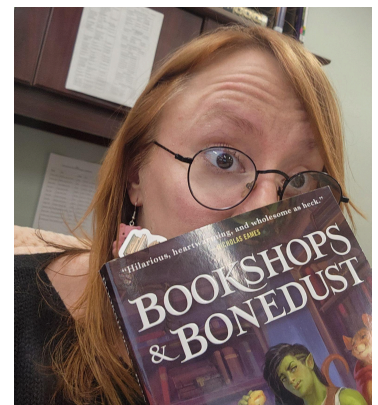
I am thrilled to be part of a group that has been so welcoming and encouraging; especially considering how new I am to the WPLLA and AALL communities. Recently, as part of a welcome packet, I received the AALL Body of Knowledge [BoK] brochure which goes over 6 domains, and competencies/skills within those domains. I want to encourage anyone who has not seen the BoK before (or even if it's 'been a while') to take a [look](#) and identify the areas you excel in as well as the places that could use improvement. There is also an assessment test for each domain, if anyone is interested in seeing where they are at professionally within the space.

- P + L - Professionalism + Leadership at Every Level
- R + A - Research + Analysis
- I M - Information Management
- T + T - Teaching + Training
- M + O - Marketing + Outreach
- M + B - Management + Business Acumen

Enjoy the issue. Thank you, again, to everyone who assisted in the revival. Here's to many more.

All the best - Britiny

Image Credit: Britiny Hommey



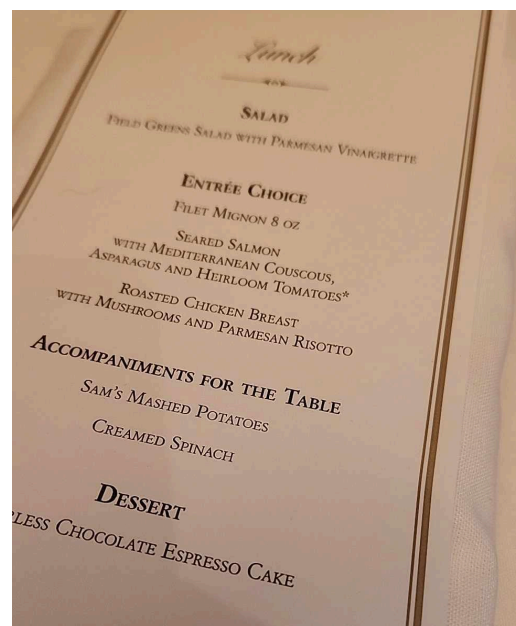
Member News

May 16th, 2024 - WPLLA celebrated their 45 years in harmony at the Spring Luncheon held at the Capital Grille in Pittsburgh, PA.



Image Credit: Victoria Swindle

A snippet of the menu is also included:



The 2024-2025 officer election results were revealed...



Image Credit: Victoria Swindle. (L - R) Victoria Swindle, Daniel Parker, Jamie Knizner, and Britiny Hommey

- **President** - Victoria Swindle, *Steptoe & Johnson PLLC*
- **Vice-President / President-Elect** - Jamie Knizner, *Washington County Law Library*
- **Secretary** - Daniel Parker, *3rd Circuit Court*
- **Treasurer** - Britiny Hommey, *Beaver County Law Library*
- **Immediate Past President** - Jessica Roman, *Reed Smith LLP*
- **Member-At-Large** - Amy Gillin - *Reed Smith LLP*

It should be noted that around September of 2024 there was a slight shift in the officers. Jamie Knizner stepped down from her V.P. position and Britiny Hommey stepped up to fill the spot. Fellow WPLLA member, Katie Lynch (*Thomas R. Kline School of Law Duquesne University*), then took over the Treasurer position for the 2024-25 academic year.

On the Horizon

Tentative schedule til the end of year:

- January 16th - WPLLA Zoom Meeting with Michael Lear from the Rare Collections department from the State Library of Pennsylvania
- February 20th - WPLLA Zoom Meeting
- March 20th - WPLLA Zoom Meeting
- April 17th - WPLLA Zoom Meeting
- May 15th - WPLLA Spring Luncheon at (Location TBD)
- June / July / August: Zoom Break!
 - PPBP session (TBD)
 - AALL 2025 in Portland, Oregon
- September 18th - WPLLA Zoom Meeting
- October 16th - WPLLA Zoom Meeting
- November 20th - WPLLA Zoom Meeting
- December - WPLLA Holiday Luncheon at (Location and Date TBD)

The Times at Barco, They Are a'Changin'

By Linda Tashbook

Thirty years ago, when the Barco Law Library at Pitt last searched for a library director, one of the major issues for the search committee was finding a director who could coordinate a local area network (LAN). The network would enable faculty to print documents in their secretaries' offices (gasp) and law school administrators to establish internal email lists (double gasp). Adding to the significance and excitement of that search was anticipation about Pittsburgh's plan for hosting the AALL Annual Meeting the following summer.

Now, as we search for a new library director, after several years of interim directors interrupted only for a short time by Marc Silverman's brief internal ascent to permanent director before retiring, the Barco Law Library is a much different place. In our current ad for a library director, the requirements and qualifications are general – designed to attract a dynamic variety of candidates. The line in the ad the most entertains me is this one: "We also seek candidates with knowledge of and experience with emerging information technology." Is there any law librarian on the planet who hasn't known about and experienced emerging information technology? Clearly, the search committee is not out to intimidate the candidate pool.

These days, there's no point in emphasizing a single current project, like the old LAN, in the job ad. Legal education, ABA standards, technology, and budgets are changing too quickly and in too many ways for a law school to expect that one realm of competence proves anything about a candidate's ability to actually run the library. The library director has to be a wizard who can spin straw into a sufficient quantity of gold that we can subscribe to specialized databases for our moot teams (including the one that competes in French) and otherwise maintain a collection that will inspire and support ever-evolving faculty and student research interests. This wizard also needs to conjure up fascinating research lessons to convince increasingly skeptical students that they really cannot and should not even try to find everything via Google. The spell books authored by this wizard have to be filled with the magic words that will soothe anxieties about machine generated evil incursions into innocent information quests. Those machine-generated incursions are a tribe of constantly shape shifting monsters. The wizard/library director should also know the spells for enticing researchers to talk with the librarians about their projects and to realize the value of having assistance from librarians.

The search committee didn't put these details, even without the mystical elements, into the job ad. Believe me though, there is a lot of exciting work happening at Pitt Law and there's plenty of room for a new library director to make a mark. If any of you are looking for a career change, a nice team of co-workers, and a good benefits package, feel free to call any of the Barconians (i.e. people who work at the Barco Law Library).¹

¹ It should be noted that the Barco Law Library has since found and hired a new director! Patrick Parsons will be starting in March of 2025. He previously worked at the Law Library at Georgia State University. More info can be found about Mr. Parsons and his publications [here](#).

AALL Highlights

By Britiny Hommey

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) selected 10 recipients of the 2024 National Medal - 5 libraries and 5 museums - on May 21, 2024.

Libraries:

- The Copper Queen Library (Bisbee, AZ)
- DC Public Library (Washington, DC)
- Griswold Memorial Library (Colrain, MA)
- Harris County Public Library (Houston, TX)
- Kent District Library (Comstock Park, MI)

Museums:

- Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum (Tucson, AZ)
- Children's Museum Houston (Houston, TX)
- Discovery Museum (Acton, MA)
- The Louis Armstrong House Museum (Queens, NY)
- Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens (Pittsburgh, PA)

There will be a celebration in Washington, DC sometime over the summer (TBA) where the award will be presented at a ceremony.

We should be proud that our very own Pittsburgh (Phipps, specifically) is commended for its outreach on this national list. To read the full article, click [here](#).

Through AALL, there are various ways to keep tabs on what is going on within Law Libraries. From open forums, to the AALL eNewsletter, to the KnowItAALL publication, and more; there are plenty of publications that AALL provides. If you're interested in subscribing to one of the AALL publications, find out more [here](#).

In other news, the DEA recently announced they are proposing a rule to move marijuana from Schedule I to Schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). The full Memorandum Opinion can be found [here](#). Ultimately, the "DEA may satisfy the United States' Single Convention obligations by placing marijuana in Schedule III while imposing additional restrictions pursuant to the CSA's regulatory authorities" (Ray, 2024). For more information, the full article written by CSU's Law Library can be found [here](#).



From the Shelf

A Selection of Recent Reads²

- *When Women Were Dragons* by Kelly Barnhill 5/5
 - Britiny's thoughts: One of the very few books that I read where I simultaneously felt multiple feelings at once. This book will make you irate for the truth to be told. In a memoir style, this book features the main character, Alex, as she grows up (U.S. 1950s-1960s) in a world where the existence of dragons is consistently denied, despite any and all signs that say otherwise. Other characters will pull on your heartstrings. Truly worth the read.
- *Vaster Wilds* by Lauren Groff 5/5
 - Dan's thoughts: I picked up *Vaster Wilds* just as the Men or Bear meme was trending on social media last week. Imagine my surprise to read "For even a good man was more deadly than the worst of the bears" early on in the novel, giving this historical fiction a contemporary connection. The narrator, a young servant girl, has lived a life of toil punctuated with episodes of violence that culminates with the famine at the Jamestown colony. It is then that she decides to make her escape, taking her chances in the wilds. What ensues is a breathless journey of survival where hunger, hardship, and isolation are the price of freedom. A brilliant story. Well written and well worth the read.
- *None of This is True* by Lisa Jewell 4.5/5
 - Anonymous' thoughts: This was a book club pick for March of 2024 but it still sticks in my brain. The formatting is unique in a modern style that's very appealing. I'd recommend the audiobook over the physical copy. *None of This is True* threads the relationship between two women who happen to be 'birthday twins' - one woman, Alix, who's a successful podcaster and an unassuming woman, Josie, who's always been "a little strange." As quickly as Josie is introduced into Alix's life she disappears and leaves a tragedy in her wake. This story is full of twists that will rip your heart out by the end.
- *We Begin at the End* by Chris Whitaker 4/5
 - Megan's thoughts: *We Begin at the End* is a novel about two types of families "the ones we are born into and the ones we create." A truly suspenseful thriller about what happens when vengeance comes to town decades later and what one family will do to protect their own.

² If you would like to suggest a book you have read recently (fiction, nonfiction, audiobook, etc.) send an email to Britiny Hommey at bstofen@gmail.com - include in the subject line: **WPLLA Newsletter Book Suggestion**.

WPLLA Contacts

Members: consider becoming an active part of our organization by assisting with the newsletter, or serving on our social media team. We promote our profession every day through educational events, forums, social events, and more.

WPLLA Membership 2024 - 2025

President	Contributing Members	Matthew Stefanko
Victoria Swindle	Dr. Joel Fishman	Ann Unger
Vice President	Jessica Roman	Frank Liu
Britiny Hommey	Lee Carnes	Amy Lovell
Secretary	Jamie Knizner	Kathleen Lynch
Daniel Parker	Allison Stewart	Dana Neacsu
Treasurer	Jane Lippmann	Charles Sprowls
Katie Lynch	Karen Shephard	Susan Harancher
Member-at-Large	Pat Roncevich	Sonya Koros
Amy Gillian	Mary Seitz	Max Peaster
Webmaster	Rachael Rossi	Ronda Fisch
Linda Tashbook	Susanna Leers	Julie Harbay
Newsletter Committee	Chris Todd	Robert Duncan
Britiny Hommey (editor)	Hong Yu	Rita Young
Daniel Parker	Melanie Cline	Stephanie Smith
Victoria Swindle	Matthew Schmidt	Stosh Jonjak
	Kim Lemon	Alex Lacey
	Tyler Semler	Debra Pfeifer
		Juli Morneweck