Message from the President

I would like to start off by thanking Mary Ann Wacker for putting together a very successful and fulfilling community service project this year. Enough HALL members volunteered to fully staff lunch service lines at three Star of Hope missions in downtown Houston. There are few other volunteer opportunities that allow us to directly serve those in our community with the greatest need and I would say there was a positive impact on the volunteers in addition to those being served. Great job, Mary Ann, and thank you to the volunteers for your hard work.

At our February meeting, AALL board member John Adkins visited to give us an update on our national organization. This was John’s first visit to Houston, so it was great to have an enthusiastic group from HALL attend his welcome dinner at Sambuca. John was happy to tour the Harris County Law Library and the Fred Parks Law Library at South Texas College of Law Houston, and to speak with our meeting attendees about their identities within AALL. Thanks, John, and

Continued on next page...
Message from the President (continued)

thanks to all HALL members who extended him a warm welcome.

Finally, a reminder. One of the goals for this year is to bring more attention to the work HALL members are doing. If you’re following us on Facebook, you’ll notice new announcements are going up left and right, but our dedicated PR chair can’t catch everything. If you have a professional honor or highlight to report, please send a quick email to Heather Holmes.

Editor’s Notes

HALL is off to a good start in 2017, and the HALL Quarterly is standing by to record the achievements of HALL members as well as any developments of interest to the law library profession in Houston. Members and friends of HALL are cordially invited to share their news and opinions with HALL by submitting their writings to the HALL Quarterly.

- Dan Donahue

The HALL Quarterly is the official publication of Houston Area Law Librarians. The purpose is to communicate information to its members. Send contributions, comments and news items to Dan Donahue, Editor, at newsletter@houstonarealawlibrarians.org.

All contributions submitted for publication are subject to editorial review. HALL does not assume responsibility for the statements of contributors. Views or opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of Houston Area Law Librarians. The HALL Quarterly is not copyrighted, however, permission should be sought from the authors and credit given when quoting or photocopying material from this publication.

Membership dues are $40/year. For membership information, please visit the HALL Membership page.
Remembering Karl Gruben

1951-2016

On November 22, 2016, Karl Taylor Gruben, passed away after a 14 month battle with metastic lung cancer in San Diego, California. Born November 17, 1951, Karl and his older brother, David, were raised by their parents, Henry and Ramona Gruben in Pampa, Texas. Perhaps because his mother was a public school librarian, Karl knew at the age of nine years that he wanted to be a librarian. He graduated from the University of Texas with a degree in history in the early 1970’s, going on to get his LLS from the University of Texas in 1973, starting out his official law librarian career in the Texas State Law Library afterward.

In 1977, he became the director of Vinson & Elkins, L.L.P.’s law libraries, staying with the firm until 2001. While at Vinson and Elkins he met the love of his life, Linda McCloud, in the firm's law library. They married in 1991, while both were still working at Vinson & Elkins (Linda as an attorney). In 2004, Karl switched from private law libraries to academic law libraries. In 2004, St. Thomas Law School in Miami Gardens, Florida, took a chance on Karl and offered him a tenure track position and the directorship of the law school's law library. In 2010, Karl moved to the University of San Diego, School of Law, where he was the Associate Dean of Technology, Director of the Learning Resource Center, and Professor of Law. Karl loved being a law librarian all his life – loved everything about it. He will be remembered with love and respect by all who knew him, worked with him or for him. He was a tireless innovator; could see and plan decades into the future; was a gentle, kind and brilliant manager of the amazing talent of all those who worked on his staff; a team player par excellence wherever he found himself. For Karl, it was all about service and excellence – and fun. Karl had a sly, wicked sense of humor.

The idyllic San Diego life was tragically cut short by the sudden appearance of metastic lung cancer, diagnosed in October 2015. He fought this disease with his usual selfless regard for others by being always upbeat and optimistic, surrounding himself with family, friends, colleagues.

He is survived by his brother, David Gruben, of Texas; by his niece Erin Gross, and her husband Chris Gross, and their three children of Colorado; by his Aunt Ruth and her two daughters and their families of New Mexico. He also survived by his loving and much-loved wife, Linda McCloud, and his three adored step-children and their families.

This obituary appeared in the Houston Chronicle on December 2, 2016.
Continuing Education Update

I would like to encourage you to attend the annual HALL Spring Seminar, being held Wednesday, March 8. Breakfast and registration will start at 8:30 a.m. and the seminar will begin at 9:00 a.m. This year’s seminar covers Specialized Legal Research, and is designed for both attorneys and law librarians:

Katy Badeaux, Reference and Research Librarian at the University of Houston’s John O’Quinn Law Library, will start off the seminar with a discussion of Securities Law Research. Securities law is a difficult but important area and Katy’s talk will provide valuable information.

In the second hour, Dan Donahue, the International and Foreign Law Librarian at the University of Houston Law Library, and I will cover Environmental Law Research. Environmental law is a vast and comprehensive area of law that is challenging to attorneys and law librarians alike, requiring both groups to navigate numerous statutes, regulations, case law, and administrative materials.

Finally, David Brackus, Information Specialist at Jefferies & Company, will cover Business Research. Mr. Brackus will focus on the basics of business research, from researching public and private companies to industries and current trends.

I am also happy to announce that Professor Geoffrey Hoffman, from the University of Houston Law Center’s Immigration Clinic, will be speaking on immigration issues to our members at our Wednesday, April 12th meeting.

Chris Dykes
Legal Tech Institute
at the Harris County Law Library

In October, 2016, the Harris County Law Library launched its Legal Tech Institute ("LTI") to expand the educational opportunities available to our patrons. LTI combines content focused on the technology small firm attorneys and self-represented litigants need to get their legal work done with flexible learning options. We have offered free traditional CLEs that are open to all covering topics like social media for attorneys and Microsoft Word for legal work. A recording of each session now appears on the Law Library’s YouTube channel and website, and attorneys who watch the videos can earn the same CLE credit as those who attended in person. Viewers will also find 3-minute screencasts that cover discrete legal tech tasks and links to vendor training materials and legal tech news.

The philosophy behind LTI is the same as the Harris County Law Library’s: promoting open and equal justice for all. In practice, we are attempting to reduce technology barriers faced by individuals interacting with the legal system. This may include providing training directly to self-represented litigants who need to use Microsoft Word to draft pleadings or it might involve assisting the solo and small firm practitioners in developing the tech skills they need in their practice. In each case, we are offering training to those who might not otherwise have access to the information.

LTI is also an opportunity for the local legal community to share knowledge. We regularly have guest speakers discuss a legal tech topic within their expertise. In December, law librarians from the Texas State Law Library joined us to discuss their free legal research tools. Representatives from Lexis and Westlaw have also dropped by for programs we call “Vendor Visits” to teach patrons how to use the free database access available in the Law Library. Upcoming programs will feature local attorneys and, in June, HALL’s own Saskia Mehlhorn will join us to discuss applications of artificial intelligence for legal work. If you would like to share your expertise on a legal tech topic, we would love to hear from you. Visit our LTI Call for Proposals form to submit your program and to learn more about participating in LTI.

Joe Lawson
HALL President

Joe Lawson presenting at LTI CLE – Word for Lawyers and Other Law Types (November 18, 2016).
Notes From a Former
HALL President

I was fortunate to serve as HALL President in 2013-2014. For that year’s November/December issue of the HALL Newsletter, I wrote the following:

As this is the season for Gratitude, Goodwill, and Gift-Giving, it seems appropriate to express my sincere appreciation for the gift that I’ve been given -- the opportunity to serve HALL in a meaningful way. My involvement has been, and continues to be, a rewarding experience to an extent that I never could have predicted 18 months ago. I can’t overstate how personally and professionally enriching this last year has been. I am indebted to Kristina, Patti and Saskia for encouraging me to take a leadership role in the organization, so to each of you and to all the members of HALL, thank you.

When Kristina, Patti, and Saskia approached me about serving as Vice President/President-Elect, I was reluctant and more than a little intimidated. I had never served on the HALL Executive Board in any capacity, nor had I played a significant leadership role in any other professional organization. I worried about the time that such a responsibility would require, and I felt certain that I wouldn’t be able to find any presenters for our monthly meetings. The idea of planning a half-day Spring Seminar was downright scary! As I talked to Saskia and Patti, who were serving as President and Vice President at the time, I felt reassured and even excited. I was ready!

I would be responsible for planning only five meetings of the year. August, December, January, and February are reserved for other events – AALL Recap, the HALLiday Party, Community Service, and the AALL Chapter Visit. The HALLiday party does require planning, but other HALL members are always willing to help. (Call me!) The Spring Seminar can be daunting, but, again, plenty of people will lend a hand and use their connections to help you plan a terrific program. When the pieces fit together, the feeling of pride in a job well done is worth all the effort.

So, my advice to those considering a position on the HALL Executive Board is this: Remember that you are among friends who all want you –and HALL – to succeed. Serving on the Board is the perfect way to connect with your colleagues and build friendships. If you
don’t typically seek the spotlight, nothing will bring you out of your shell like playing an active leadership role in HALL. I highly recommend it!

In the same newsletter article mentioned above, I also said this:

*In all things, we should endeavor to be “Good, Giving, and Game” -- good to one another, giving of ourselves, and game for any new experiences.*

I can’t take credit for these wise words, but I fully embrace them. As for HALL, the sentiment they embody captures the essence of our fantastic organization. Serving on the HALL Executive Board and taking on the leadership role of Vice President/President-Elect (even if you’ve never served on the Board in any capacity) is a terrific way to give of yourself, for the good of your colleagues and our profession, while being game for a new life experience.

Heather Holmes
Chair, HALL Public Relations Committee

HALLiday Party Pictures
HALL MEETING MINUTES
January 11, 2017
South Texas College of Law Library

The January HALL Meeting was called to order by President Joe Lawson at 12:04 p.m.

The November minutes will be made available at next month’s meeting. The Treasurer’s Report was approved. Laura moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report and Caren seconded.

Committee Reports:

Archives: No report.

Bylaws: No report.

Continuing Education: Joe Lawson reported for Chris Dykes on our upcoming programs. We will have a visit from an AALL Board member in February but it will not be Katherine Coolidge, visitor TBA.

Government Relations: No report.

Community Service: Mary Ann Wacker reported that our community service project will be serving lunch at the Star of Hope this Saturday, January 14, 2017. One slot is still open. They will meet at the Dot for breakfast at 9 am. Volunteers will serve lunch from 11:00 am – 1:30 pm.

Membership: No report.

Nominations: No report.

Placement: No report. Joe mentioned to check the blog any upcoming available positions.

Public Relations: No report. Like us on Facebook.

Scholarships and Grants: No report. The Board will meet on Friday to determine the amount of the AALL travel grant.

Vendor Relations: No report.

Web site: Richard reported on the website and the listserv. He thanked everyone for their posts on Facebook which improves the look of the website. He is working on the functionality of PayPal but overall it seems to be working well. He spoke about the listserv in regards to cybercrime, mainly phishing attacks. He is willing to work with anyone’s IT department so HALL’s listserv will not be seen as spam.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:13 p.m.
HALL Meeting Minutes - February

HALL MEETING MINUTES
February 8, 2017
South Texas College of Law Library

The February HALL Meeting was called to order by President Joe Lawson at 12:04 p.m.

The November 2016 and January 2017 minutes were approved. The Treasurer’s Report was approved.

Old Business: Saskia Melhorn mentioned that an AALL travel grant is being provided by PLLIP that is posted on their website. Joe announced that the AALL Call for Papers is open through March 1. Joe thanked those HALL Board members that attended dinner with John Adkins, AALL Board Member, last night. He also congratulated Mary Ann Wacker on the successful community service project.

New Business: Joe announced that the HALL Board approved funds for travel grants for the AALL annual meeting and that Scholarships and Grants Committee Chair, Andre Davison, would send information out soon.

Committee Reports:
Archives: No report.
Bylaws: No report. We’ve got them. Submit any changes at the May meeting.
Continuing Education: Chris Dykes reported on the upcoming half day Spring Seminar. It will be on March 8, 2017. Breakfast will be at 8:30 am. There will be 3 1-hour sessions beginning at 9 am. The plan is to receive CLE credit for attendance. An announcement will be coming next week. Joe thanked South Texas for providing a tour for John Adkins.

Government Relations: There was discussion regarding the State Bar publicizing public records. They are working on writing a letter and any input is welcomed. Joe discussed combating making county law library funds available for non-county law library issues. He will be working with Margaret on that.

Community Service: Mary Ann Wacker reported about our community service project where volunteers served lunch at the Star of Hope, all 3 facilities. She thanked those that volunteered.

Membership: No report.
Nominations: Saskia Melhorn will put something out regarding nominations for the May meeting. Self-nominations are welcomed.
Placement: No report. Joe mentioned to check the blog and Facebook page periodically for any upcoming available positions.
Public Relations: No report. If you have any news to share then please send.
Scholarships and Grants: The Board approved the AALL travel grant. 2-3 grants will be available so please apply.
Vendor Relations: No report. A new department at Lexis is showing interest. Colleen is fielding emails.
Web site: No report. Website is functional. Joe reminded everyone that Richard is willing to work with anyone’s IT department so HALL’s listserv will not be seen as spam.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:14 p.m.
For the promotion of:
- Ideas
- Sharing
- Education
- Cooperation
- Resources
- Networking

Houston Area Law Librarians is a chapter of the American Association of Law Librarians.

Our monthly meetings are held at the South Texas College of Law. We present a half-day seminar in the Fall and a full-day seminar in the Spring on legal topics. However, meetings are subject to change. Visit the HALL Website for more information.

There are close to 100 members of HALL. We are librarians in firms, law schools, and courts as well as vendors and Library School students.

Visit us online at:
http://houstonarealawlibrarians.org