

VALL Review

Vancouver Association of Law Libraries

Volume 20, No. 3

Inside this issue:

The President's Desk	1-2
From the Editors	3
Screencasting Workshop Overview	4-5
Member News	6
Peter Roberts	7
A Day in the Life of a Library Technician	8-10
CALL Conference Report	11-12
SLA Conference Report	13-14
Member Survey: Conferences	15-16
Submission Guidelines	17

The President's Desk

It's difficult to say where the past 10 months went, but our VALL season has certainly gone by fast! I never intended my year as VALL President to coincide with my first year in a new business, but that was what I've faced over these preceding months. I truly believe 2007-2008 has been a great VALL year, but know that I owe a great deal of thanks to this year's executive for that success. And so for each of you—Wilma, Johanne, Katie, Gabriella, Yoko, Drew, Rob, Andy, Deborah, Emma, and Susannah—I offer my sincerest “thank you”!

The Vancouver law library market has traditionally been noted for its stability, but over the coming summer months, I suspect this will change. A few of our colleagues are altering their personal geographies—namely, Susan Crysler and Emma Wood. This has already started a shuffling process—which I jokingly referred to at our last luncheon as “library dominoes”. Law firms are going to have challenges in their recruiting efforts, as the scarcity of mid-to-senior level librarians in our association demographic is likely to begin to cause problems soon. This is only personal conjecture, of course, but watching the job postings that arise over the summer months will be very interesting!

In May, the Association handed out *three* Peter Bark Bursaries, to Lawson Lundell LLP's **Graeme Dempsey**, who is planning to attend AALL this year in Portland; Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP's **Gabriella Barsoum**, who is planning to attend this year's Internet Librarian conference in Monterey; and Harper Grey LLP's **Christina Tribe**, who just attended the annual SLA conference down in Seattle. To each of you, Graeme, Gabriella, and Christina, VALL congratulates you and wishes you the best of luck in your chosen learning endeavours! And to the rest of the association, I'd like to emphasize the growing level of educational support that the Peter Bark Bursary provides. We should all be proud of the way this fund has helped VALL members in recent years. This year, the Peter Bark Bursary has arguably made its biggest impact to date.

The Association has continued to be very active. Coming off our very successful 2008 workshop on screencasting technology, our April meeting heard IIL3's Joshua Fireman speak on “The Politics of KM: The Challenges of Implementing Knowledge Management in a Law Firm”. As has been tradition for the past three years, this event was a joint meeting with the BCLMA KM Subsection. Joshua's talk was thought-provoking, and it should be noted that VALL's financial assistance contributed to bringing in this speaker.

Our final meeting of the year in June was a bit of a mixed bag. VALL is probably one of the few associations whose members actually “make friends” with the vendors; well, we call them



Steve Matthews
VALL President
2007-2008

VALL Review

VALL Executive

President

Steve Matthews
Principal, Stem Legal

Vice President

Wilma MacFarlane
Farris LLP

Past President

Johanne Blenkin
BC Courthouse Library Society

Secretary/Membership

Gabriella Barsoum
Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP

Treasurer

Katie Heung
Borden Ladner Gervais LLP

Programs Committee

Rob Golbeck
Clark Wilson LLP

Drew Jackson
BC Courthouse Library Society

Deborah MacLeod
BC Courthouse Library Society

Communications Committee

VALL Review Editors

Susannah Tredwell
Lawson Lundell LLP

Emma Wood
Alexander Holburn Beaudin & Lang LLP

Website/Discussion List

Andy Froese
Borden Ladner Gervais LLP

Rob Golbeck
Clark Wilson LLP

Steve Matthews
Stem Legal

Susannah Tredwell
Lawson Lundell LLP

Member at Large

Yoko Beriault
Thorsteinssons LLP

The President's Desk, cont.

(Continued from page 1)

“publishers”, but you get the drift. This was evident with this month's retirement of Canada Law Book's Peter Roberts, and how our membership lined up to sing Peter's praises. Gwendoline Hoar, Gillian Crabtree, Katie Heung, and Wilma MacFarlane all shared personal stories, including a poem written by Gillian (see page 16)! And to top it off, Peter's competition, namely Marty Clarke (CCH) and Arthur Vaz (Butterworths), proceeded to stand up and share exactly the same sentiments. Peter will certainly be missed. We rounded out the meeting with a new way to share knowledge: one-minute session recaps from CALL conference delegates, and with 15 (short) minutes of round table discussions to help brainstorm topics and themes for the coming year's programming and goals.

As I turn the Presidential keys over to Wilma MacFarlane, I would like to say that VALL continues to be a very important part of my life. The people I know in this association are not only colleagues, but true friends. As careers go, one could only hope to be part of an association that offers the personal and professional support network that we share. I'm happy to have contributed; I'm happy to have VALL.

Steve Matthews is Principal of Stem Legal Web Enterprises.

VALL Review

From the Editors

**Susannah Tredwell, Lawson Lundell LLP
and Emma Wood, Alexander Holburn Beaudin & Lang LLP**

Our June wrap-up/roundtable meeting provided an opportunity for several of our members to give toasts and thanks to Canada Law Book's Peter Roberts on the special occasion of his (semi-) retirement. Peter has been a fixture of the Vancouver law library community for more than thirty years, and his gentle nature and gracious character have left quite an impression on us all.

Something that Peter said in his reply to these toasts really struck me. In describing his approach to sales and to customer service, Peter said, "Whether it's to a sole practitioner or a huge law firm, a union shop or a police headquarters, a call is a call. A call is a call." It is this attitude of respect and individualized, outstanding service for every client—no matter how many books he will buy or what percent of her budget she will spend on your products—that makes Peter someone we can all admire and aspire to be like. (This is evident by the fact that many of us managed to work Peter's name into our contributions to this issue of the *VALL Review*—without knowledge of others' intentions of doing exactly the same!)

We would all do well to remember that line, "A call is a call", each time we are serving someone, regardless of whether it's a demanding senior lawyer, a needy student, or a frenzied colleague who needs our help. In this issue of *VALL Review*, you will find lots of information and tips on how to strive for excellence on the job. The theme of this issue is "Conferences", and we've assembled reports from CALL and SLA—the AALL and Internet Librarian conferences will be reported on in upcoming issues—and the results of our survey. We hope that if you are not able to attend a conference this year, learning about others' experiences will be the next best thing.

On a personal note, as another year of great VALL programming has come to an end, and I prepare to move out of province, I think back on the past five years that I have been a member of this fine organization. It is because of this organization that I got my first law library job, and discovered that your colleagues can also be your friends. It is only in the past year that I became involved with the executive, but it has made my VALL experience all the richer. I would like to extend my thanks to Beth Galbraith of Clark Wilson LLP for taking over as co-editor of the *VALL Review*.

I encourage everyone who has not served on the executive in the past to get in touch with Wilma MacFarlane, our President for 2008-2009, to find out how to get involved. Everyone has a talent that can be put to use! To all those who have been working so hard the last year to make VALL an engaging and helpful association, thank you for your commitment and contributions —we are all grateful for your time and effort.

Emma Wood

Screencasting in Libraries: an Overview of the VALL Workshop

Alex McNeur

This year's annual VALL workshop, held on March 27, 2008, was a hands-on introduction to screencasting, an increasingly popular method of delivering instruction in a multi-media format. The workshop was held at UBC Robson Square. The computer lab was an exceptional classroom facility, equipped with 25 fully networked computers, an instructor's station linked to a data projector, and superb on-site technical staff.

"Screencasting in Libraries", presented by **Drew Jackson** and **Alex McNeur** of the BC Courthouse Library Society, began with an overview of what libraries are doing with this emerging technology. This overview included a viewing of one of the screencasts on researching legislation, created by the Courthouse Library. (To view the other screencasts in the series, visit the BC Courthouse Library's website at www.bccls.bc.ca.) The vast majority of the half day workshop had the participants create a short screencast themselves, using Camtasia screen recording software.



Screen capture of a BCCLS video tutorial

But what is screencasting? A screencast is a digital recording in which the setting is partly or wholly a computer screen, often accompanied by an audio narration that describes the on-screen action. Screencasts are frequently used for tutorials and demonstrations, especially of computer software, databases and websites.

After an overview of the Camtasia software, it was time for everyone to try it out for themselves. By the end of the workshop, each person would create a mini screencast that would capture a search of the Department of Justice website for an amusing section of the Criminal Code. This section states it is an offence to water ski after dark (section 250(2) for those who are curious). The first part of the workshop focused on recording this search and importing some other files that would be used in the second half to make the screencast a more visually exciting experience.

There was a half-hour break which provided a good opportunity to talk with the vendors. Thanks to **Canada Law Book, CLE, CCH, Quickscribe, LexisNexis** and **Thomson Carswell** for attending the workshop and for their generous donations to the Peter Bark Professional Development Bursary.

The second half of the workshop was devoted to discovering tools within Camtasia to make the screen recording a better instructional tool, as well as visually appealing. It began with people adding in a couple of scanned images from old statute volumes to the end of their recording. The purpose of this was to show how an online tutorial does not need to be only screen recordings, but can utilize scanned pages from print sources (or other images) that will help with the overall objective of the tutorial.

From there, everyone experimented with Camtasia's effects to incorporate transitions between the screen recording and the still images. For example, because the images were in fact pages from a print source, everyone used a transition that simulated the turning of a page. Because the media window in which a screencast is watched is often small, the effective use of the zoom feature was demonstrated. As the screen recording began with the entire Department of Justice website visible, the search portion of the screen was magnified when the search terms were being typed so that they would be clearly visible. The perils of excessive zooming in and out also became clear however, as one had the sensation of being tossed about on the high

(Continued on page 5)

VALL Review

Screencasting in Libraries, cont.

(Continued from page 4)

seas. Further effects were added to the growing arsenal of tools that can make the screencast a fantastic learning tool: text bubbles that could pop up with additional information, and a highlight feature that would draw one's eye to the appropriate part of the screen (these effects are known as callouts).

To really make the screencast complete, some audio was added. This of course can be anything, and is most often a person narrating the action. But in this case, since we recorded the section of the Criminal Code was about water skiing, it seemed more appropriate to add a little surf music.

The final part of the workshop was all about producing the video so that it could be put on a website. The variety of file types the screencast could be produced in were all explained, focusing on how one file type might be advantageous over another, depending on what the screencast contained and how it is to be viewed.

The VALL workshop was a pleasure to do, and the positive feedback has been steadily rolling in. We are particularly pleased with how many libraries are excited to create their own screencasts. The workshop had participants from law, academic, public, and special libraries, as well as students, so we hope to see a wide range of creative screencasts in the near future. For further resources on screencasting, please see the list below:

- **Jon Udell's "What is Screencasting" article on O'Reilly Digital Media** — <http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/oreilly/digitalmedia/2005/11/16/what-is-screencasting.html>

A concise overview of what screencasting is and how to make a screencast, written by the man who coined the term "screencasting".

- **Meredith Farkas, "Random and Cold Medicine-Induced Thoughts on Screencasting", on her Information Wants to Be Free blog** — <http://meredith.wolfwater.com/wordpress/index.php/2006/11/30/random-and-cold-medicine-induced-thoughts-on-screencasting/>

An interesting account of her experiences with screencasting in a library setting, with links to several library screencasting examples.

- **Greg Notess' LibCasting blog** — <http://www.notess.com/screencasting/>

A blog specifically devoted to screencasting and libraries. Several posts about specific tools that you can use, including free ones (which don't offer the same full featured package as Camtasia Studio or Adobe Captivate).

- **Camtasia Studio Learning Center** — <http://www.techsmith.com/learn/camtasia/default.asp>

Screencast tutorials on how to use the screencasting software. A great way to learn how to make and edit screen recordings, add titles and transitions, produce and save screencasts.

- **Wikipedia page on "Screencasts"** — <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Screencast>

Links to key articles and resources on screencasts, including screencasting software options.

Alex MacNeur works as a librarian at the BC Courthouse Library Society.

Membership Matters

VALL is delighted to welcome the following new members:

Brad Kamphuis, Thomson Carswell (brad.kamphuis@thomson.com)

Stephen Karr (student member) (skarr000@mylangara.bc.ca)

Katherine Melville, Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP (ref@fasken.com)

Katherine earned an LL.B. from UBC in 2005, and her M.L.I.S. from SLAIS in 2007. She has also been a long-term employee of the VPL and is hopeful that her years of public service experience will bring a certain flair to her new position at Fasken Martineau DuMoulin.

Erika Nicklom, Law Society of British Columbia (enicklom@lsbc.org)

Member Announcements

Susan Crysler is leaving McCarthy Tétrault for a position in at Mello Jones & Martin (www.mjm.bm) in Bermuda. She will be replaced as Director, Library Services by **Joanne Lecky**.

Andy Froese is leaving Borden Ladner Gervais LLP and replacing **Emma Wood** as Library Technician at Alexander Holburn Beaudin & Lang LLP. Emma is joining Tapper Cuddy LLP in Winnipeg as well as Stem Legal, and can be reached at emma@stemlegal.com.

Katherine Melville has joined Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP as their Reference and Electronic Services Librarian. She has replaced **Suzanne Geba** who is now working as a librarian for the Physiotherapy Association of B.C.

Peter Roberts who has been serving the legal community since 1966 is retiring from his full-time Account Manager position with Canada Law Book as from June 30, 2008. Peter will be still working with Canada Law Book as an Account Manager for Police Services across Canada. The new Account Manager is **Janette Nation**, who will be serving the British Columbia and Yukon areas in Peter's place.

Janette is a law librarian and lawyer who for the past seven years has been serving with the Public Prosecutor's Office in Tasmania. She is based in Victoria, BC and will be setting aside trips to Vancouver on the third week of every month so she can attend our VALL lunches. Her contact details are:

Janette Nation

Direct tel: 250-590-2720

Fax: 250-590-2722

Email: jnation@canadalawbook.ca

Paula Gardner has replaced **Elizabeth Steele** at Davis. Elizabeth is now working at the Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library in Owen Sound, Ontario.

Arthur Vaz of Butterworths won the BC Singles Titles in Bowling in April 2008 and went on the compete in the Canadian Open in Hamilton.

If you have recently switched employers, received a promotion, or if any of your contact information has changed, please drop a line to VALL Review Editors & Membership Secretary. We also welcome short biographies of new members.

VALL Review

Peter Roberts: a Gentleman and a Friend

Editors' note: Peter Roberts' contributions to the Vancouver law library community were recognized and celebrated at the June VALL Luncheon. Peter asked that we pass his thanks along to the membership, and we are pleased to do so below.

I would like to take this opportunity in thanking the VALL members for all their best wishes and kind words in acknowledgment of my retirement as the Account Manager for Canada Law Book. All your kind words and generosity at the June lunch session literally 'blew me away'. It was all rather like a 'Love in' without the marihuana!! I feel so privileged to be part of the VALL organization and plan on volunteering in a meaningful way during the coming year. I have had a wonderful time attending to your many needs down through the years and believe me the pleasure has been all mine. Even though I am not going to be your Account Manager in the future, I will be close by, as I will be working in my new part-time position as the CLB Account Manager – Police Services. It has been wonderful working with you and I am looking forward to seeing you all at the future VALL luncheons.

Peter Roberts

Tribute to Peter Roberts on the Occasion of his Retirement

When we think of CLB, it always means Peter
With your colourful ties, you couldn't be any neater

If we need a book quickly for a case on the go
You deliver it with speed, as we all know

You always treat your customers with loyalty and grace
Although with all the travelling, not always face to face

You have been in legal publishing for 42 years
So saying farewell may well bring some tears

But golfing and skiing should easily replace
All the new CLB stuff – including "BEST CASE"

As customers we're most grateful for your many years of service
And indeed your retirement probably makes us all a bit nervous

On behalf of the VALL members, I would just like to say
We wish you lots of fun & laughter in your future, everyday

~Gillian Crabtree

Somebody Spoke And I Went Into A Dream: A Day in the Life of a Library Technician

Graeme Dempsey

- 7:00 Ignore alarm clock.
- 7:09 Ignore alarm clock.
- 7:18 Ignore alarm clock.
- 7:27 Emerge from cocoon.
- 8:18 Start running along Robson Street like a lunatic.
- 8:30(ish) Arrive at office.
- 8:34:05 Ask Susannah to collect newspapers.
- 8:34:09 Notice that Susannah has already collected the newspapers.
- 8:35 Read news online: Glasgow Herald, BBC News, and the Library intranet page for something juicy and/or the latest legislation introduced. (Seriously; I can't get enough of the Greenhouse Emission bills.)
- 8:45 Shelve books and notice that *The Province* has been removed—consider ways to retrieve it from the men's washroom. Request Gwendoline allocate money for a pair of tongs in the next library budget.
- 8:55 First decaf of the day but forget to drink in haste to find third reading of bill.
- 9:00 Locate obscure and exotic (i.e., Australian) cases on Lexis for frantic research lawyer who hasn't slept for weeks and hasn't noticed I have fractured my toe.
- 9:15 Retrieve mail from office services and pinch two of their glazed Timbits.
- 9:16 Giggle about dead British showbusiness personalities with another ex-pat.
- 9:20 Open and process mail whilst scarfing down fat-free yogurt.
- 9:21 Complain about publishers' methods of packaging looseleaf releases—the Fort Knox Theory.
- 9:22 Complain to Susannah that my Amazon parcel has not arrived. Susannah reminds me that "parcel" is on the list of Words I Am Not Allowed To Say.
- 9:35 Phone Susannah to complain about serials record not renewing properly on SydneyPlus.
- 9:45 Juggling three separate case requests...which lawyer do I like more?
- 9:55 Navigating Quicklaw, Canlii and Lexis at the same time whilst trying to upload CCH newsletters. Head is throbbing.
- 10:25 My mother calls during the uploading of *Corporate Brief*.
- 10:27 Scream like a fangirl when news reaches me that Streep's version of "The Winner Takes It All" is available for download. Annoy co-workers by reminding them it's only 42 days until the *Mamma Mia!* premiere. Annoy co-workers further by chanting "Life is nothing if I don't get to attend the premiere in Stockholm."

Editors' Note

This is the third "A Day in the Life of a Library Technician" column. Please contact Susannah Tredwell or Beth Galbraith if you are interested in writing an installment for an upcoming issue.

(Continued on page 9)

VALL Review

A Day in the Life of a Library Technician, cont.

(Continued from page 8)

10:30 More decaf, but realise it's not a fresh pot. More vitriolic complaining.

10:31 Three million Butterworths e-newsletters arrive, flooding my inbox and causing mild hysteria. Uploading begins, but is interrupted by student asking where to return books. I show him large "Please Return Library Books Here" sign.

10:45 Trauma sets in when I realise how many invoices need to be done. Consider discarding them and catching the next flight to Honolulu.

11:00 Working on complicated US scientific journal request using a pay-as-you-print option. Mild panic as lawyer calls to say she needed them five minutes ago.

11:15 Quick chat with Bozena, our lovely Polish filing clerk; receive reprimand from Susannah about mimicking Eastern European accents during working hours. (This is on the List of Things I Am Not Allowed To Do.)

11:30 E-mail the "wee Glesga belter" (who just happens to be a pure dead brilliant librarian) to confirm curry plans for noon.

11:32 Labour lawyer stops by to harangue me about my taste in music, and my ethnicity. Remind him of the firm's harassment policy which forbids discrimination on basis of ethnicity (in my case, Scots.) Lawyer tells me to lodge complaint with harassment officer; she has forms pre-filled with his name to save time.

11:33 Another Labour lawyer interrupts flogging session to ask for LRB decision which, I discover, is not available online. Contact the wondrous Mercedes.

11:55 Curry with aforementioned Scottish librarian—allegedly my accent thickens and speech becomes faster during lunch.

1:05pm Rushing like a maniac along Georgia hoping Gwendoline won't notice I'm late back from lunch.

1:10 Monitoring Hansard for same lawyer who wanted third reading of bill.

1:15 Ignore call from dentist. Listen to message from dentist. Delete.

1:17 Exchange delicious yam recipes with legal assistant who assures me they're good for my health.

1:25 Begin arduous horror of processing invoices. Loud stamping and muttering about wasted paper and the environment.

1:45 Break into chorus of "Get Happy" to steel myself for the task at hand. Smile at confused legal assistants who pass by with concerned looks on their faces.

2:25 Do an impersonation of Susannah. Apparently this sounds like a drag queen doing Joan Collins.

2:45 Nip down to mail room. Shocked to discover an avalanche of mail from Carswell. Consider retiring from the profession. Co-incidentally, receive email from much-missed former library technician now retired from the profession.

3:00 Seeing circles after a while, so take a breather

"Nip down to mail room. Shocked to discover an avalanche of mail from Carswell. Consider retiring from the profession."

(Continued on page 10)

A Day in the Life of a Library Technician, (still) cont.

(Continued from page 9)

from mountain of invoices to do more Hansard monitoring. (Dismayed to discover that just because the "Orders of the Day" indicates there will be a Committee Report discussion on a certain day, it doesn't necessarily guarantee it will transpire that year.)

3:08 CLE Digests arrive, and are duly uploaded to our Intranet by moi before I resume work on the pile of invoices which I'm certain has increased in size.

3:10 Bankruptcy lawyer appears at my door; seems to think invoices are a figment of my imagination and suggests we begin a search on Quicklaw.

3:28 Drop enormous collection of invoices on Gwendoline's chair. A loud and emphatic thud reverberates through the building as they hit the chair.

3:30 Mouth dry due to lack of water—stop by coffee room, and notice that someone has dropped off a bag of chocolate truffles. Begin cursing that person as I remove three from the bag.

3:35 Mail clerk appears at my door with a truckload of Butterworths packages. I tell him I'm not interested. He leaves them in my office anyway.

3:37 Begin process of opening boxes mail clerk has left for me. More cursing of publishers' methods of posting releases in bizarre triplicate packaging. What do they think is going to happen if someone accidentally opens a package not intended for them? Are *Immigration Law and Practice* releases really that interesting?

3:48 I stare at existing pile of looseleaf filing which is waiting to be filed, and wonder why Bozena works only 16 hours a week. File one or two releases, and wonder why she has such good vision.

3:57 Interrupted by Real Estate lawyer who needs articles from Infomart.

4:00 Research lawyer calls again, asking for Shepardization of utilities decision from 1923. From Oklahoma. Consider going "down the pub."

4:10 File sign-out cards in box, and try to shelve as many books as possible.

4:25 Realise I'm not getting out on time when Bankruptcy lawyer phones with a follow-up question. Revisit Quicklaw.

4:38 Print several acts from QP Legaleze, remembering to carefully sign-out (the horror of *not* signing-out properly from QP Legaleze still fresh in my mind).

4:45 Do an impersonation of Gwendoline whilst shelving more books. More confused looks from library patrons. Realise I need a better wig.

4:55 Scuttle off for the evening, thankful it's not Monday and I don't have to battle with drug peddlers who feel the need to do laundry at the same time as me....

"Mail clerk appears at my door with a truckload of Butterworths packages. I tell him I'm not interested. He leaves them in my office anyway."

VALL Review

Conference Report: CALL 2008

Susannah Tredwell

The 2008 conference of the Canadian Association of Law Libraries was in Saskatoon this year, with the conference split between two hotels: the Delta Bessborough and the Sheraton. As usual there were a varied collection of plenaries and conference sessions, ranging from military law to one on genetically modified foods to one entitled “Is Normal Working for You?” Two that I found of particular interest were one on cost recovery (a subject near and dear to many of our hearts) and one on tacit knowledge.

Cost Recovery and Profit Making in Private Law Libraries

The session on costs recovery featured three speakers: Lajeane Humphries (from Williamson & Wyatt in Oregon) who discussed policies on cost recovery, Karen Leung (from Davis in Vancouver) who discussed case law regarding disbursements, and Mary Saulig (from Goodmans LLP) who talked about the practical aspects of cost recovery.

How do you develop policies on cost recovery? ABA Formal Ethics Opinion 93-379 states that it is improper for an American legal firm to make a profit on disbursements unless they have already explained their rationale for doing so to the client; prior to 1993 some firms did make money off online searching. Lajeane then provided some statistics to explain what types of firm bill back. The size of the firm affects billing; larger firms are much more likely to bill clients for online research than smaller ones are, and solo practitioners rarely do it. (Keep in mind that this information is based on American statistics.) Lajeane stated that it was very unusual for a firm to make a profit on online charges. If a firm got discounted rates, these discounts were often passed on to the clients, and if a firm did not have discounted rates, then it was not unusual for those online services to only be used for billable files. In addition, it was quite common for firms not to bill for services where electronic services had replaced print services, e.g. law reporters. It was important that a firm’s billing policies regarding research charges were usually indicated in client engagement letters.

“Larger firms are much more likely to bill clients for online research than smaller ones are, and solo practitioners rarely do it.”

Lajeane emphasized that it was crucial to have lawyer buy-in for the firm’s cost-recovery policy, no matter what that policy might be. Lawyers should be given the figures that showed what percentage of online costs was being recovered and how much the firm was, in effect, “eating”. Most firms recovered 60-80% of their costs. She stated that it was important to get research charges on to client’s bills as soon as the work was done since that meant the bills were more likely to get paid.

She talked about some of the various products that help in cost recovery: client-matter validation software (although there can be glitches in getting it to interact properly), site tracking, and ID/password management software. The major database producers have their own software to assist with cost recovery, e.g. LexisNexis’s Power Invoice, Westlaw’s Quickview.

Karen touched on the recent case law regarding the costs of legal research. Disbursements are regarded as recoverable, but lawyers have to be able to show that they are necessary. A retainer agreement should include an agreement to pay online charges. Karen concluded that payments for online searching to Quicklaw et al. should be treated as disbursements rather than overhead since they are file specific and don’t involve the purchase of tangible items.

(Continued on page 12)

Conference Report: CALL 2008, cont.

(Continued from page 11)

Tacit – Pass It!

The session on tacit knowledge started off with Susanna Duke talking about the theory of knowledge management, relating to both explicit and tacit knowledge. Ways of transferring knowledge included obvious methods like conversations and less obvious methods like office design.

Shaunna Mireau of Field LLP, Wendy Reynolds of the Ontario Workplace Tribunals and Cyndi Murphy of Stewart McKelvey talked about the actual practice of knowledge transfer. They started off with a description of their firm culture and how that affected knowledge transfer. Shaunna talked about the fact her firm's offices differed greatly in their attitudes to sharing information (some just shared it within practice groups) and that her lawyers were all very technologically competent which helped with knowledge transfer. Cyndi pointed out that the billable hour was a key factor; there wasn't time to make tacit knowledge explicit.

So how do we transfer knowledge? The participants gave examples; one popular method was "lunch and learns", the topics of which ranged widely (e.g. writing a research paper, the business of law). Other examples included the research roundtable run by WeirFoulds and the library design at Stikeman's in Toronto which turned it into an "information commons"; both of these were intended to provide a safe haven for students to learn. Wendy Reynolds spoke of "staff training days" at the WSIAT; this allowed people to hear how other people in the organization did their jobs and (as a consequence) what their information needs were. Of course not all methods work; an example given of a less than successful attempt to transfer knowledge was mentoring in the situation where the mentor wasn't really interested.

All the speakers said that knowledge transfer happened via their portals/internets. Some had "job specific" pages (e.g. partner only, associate only). Field's intranet uses PHP open source software (Joomla!). Wendy Reynolds cautioned us not to assume we knew who the audience is; she gave the example of the guys in the file room at the Federal Court who liked to know what cases were getting newspaper coverage so that they knew what cases they should be making extra copies of to meet public demand.

Susannah Tredwell works as a librarian at Lawson Lundell LLP.

CALL Conference Session Slides on the Web

PowerPoint slides and handouts are available for many of the CALL 2008 Conference sessions at <http://www.callacbd.ca/conferences/2008/program.htm>.

Also available online is Darlene Fichter's presentation, *Law Libraries Reaching for the Sky: Practical Applications of Web 2.0 Technology*, at <http://www.slideshare.net/fichter/law-libraries-reaching-for-the-sky-practical-applications-of-web-20-technology/>.

VALL Review

Conference Report: SLA 2008

Kathy Barry

I attended this year's SLA conference held in Seattle, Washington and it was made possible by the Peter Bark Bursary that I received in 2007.

During my stay, I attended many informative sessions, festive receptions, and visited the Vendors' Expo. I learned about the future of the internet, cutting-edge web tools, and the role of librarians and vendors in the library profession.

Dr. Vincent G. Cerf was our opening keynote speaker. He is the Vice President and Chief Internet Evangelist for Google, and is also known as the "father of the internet". He told the audience that the belief that information is power is "baloney." This drew a quiet pause and then he remarked, "Information sharing is power!" Ah ha! So we are not the only ones who share this belief!

He went on to say that mobile phones are the new platform for internet access and by the year 2014 he hopes to have 70% of the world's population online. After hearing Dr. Cerf's staggering goal, I was left with the conclusion that the internet is growing and it is going to continue shaping our library services towards a virtual platform.

"People want information instantly and they want it to be in real-time."

Web Tools

Web Tools for Legal Researchers was a great session to brush up on the latest resources. It was presented by Gary Price, who is the Chief Editor of Resource Shelf (<http://www.resourceshelf.com/>). Gary showcased a number of websites that provide real-time information. The websites that I found most interesting were:

- Jux2 (<http://jux2.com/>) Jux2 compares search engines and their search results. It reveals the overlap of results between search engines, which is actually quite low.
- NewsNow (<http://www.newsnw.co.uk/h/>) NewsNow is the UK's number one news portal. It contains links to headline news in real-time from a wide range sources.
- FeedM8 (<http://www.feedm8.com/web/>) FeedM8 allows you to take a website and make it mobile friendly.
- Whatsonwhen (<http://www.whatsonwhen.com/sisp/index.htm>) Whatsonwhen is a worldwide events guide for the travel bug.

Gary's message that the internet is growing and is going mobile echoed Dr. Cerf's vision of the future. People want information instantly and they want it to be in real-time. Many of the products being showcased at the Expo also reflected this trend.

Working with Vendors

When it comes to trying new products, negotiating contracts, and receiving customer support, are we satisfied with the relationships that we have with our local vendors? How do we cultivate a better rapport with them? I attended an excellent session, *If I Knew Then What I Know Now: Tales From the Dark Side*, that discussed librarian and vendor relations that shed some light on these questions. A panel of four librarians-turned-vendors offered valuable insight on how to make the most of these relationships.

The challenge between librarians and vendors is to overcome the misconceptions that each has of the other. Librarians often have the perception that the vendors are out to take advantage of them so they tend to have a

(Continued on page 14)

Conference Report: SLA 2008, cont.

(Continued from page 13)

strong distrust towards them. Vendors, often assume that a librarian has a “gatekeeper” mentality, which can limit effective communication. A librarian who is not open to sharing the needs of their organization will likely encounter difficulty in maintaining control over their resources. Without good information, the vendors will find someone else in your organization who will advise them. Inevitably, the users will suffer because the librarian will not be at the helm of the decision-making process.

After identifying the problems and challenges of working in each profession, the panelists advised us on ways to cultivate a great working relationship. Respect and open communication topped the list. Respect the other person’s time and talents so that communication can flow. Express the needs and expectations of the organization at the beginning so that the vendor can assess how their services will benefit the firm.

No matter what side of the fence we are on, we are all committed to the same profession. Focusing on the big picture can help maintain a positive attitude and outlook when it comes to working together.

Negotiating is an integral part of achieving a successful librarian-vendor relationship. Everything is negotiable. Proposals, demos, contract terms, training, and post contract usage. Tell the vendor what you want. Everyone’s time is money. For example, if a vendor hasn’t prepared that proposal you asked for two weeks ago, its okay to say, “I can’t meet with you until that proposal is ready.” Tell the vendor what you need and what your bottom line is. It is important set up the parameters that each person is able to work in so that the negotiation process can thrive.

By understanding the needs of librarians and vendors, it is easier to communicate openly with honesty and respect. After the session, I marched into the Vendors’ Expo and approached many booths with little trepidation. I felt comfortable asking questions about their products and informing them on the needs of my law firm.

When I returned to Vancouver, I attended the VALL June lunch where many librarians remarked on the outstanding service they have received from Peter Roberts. The former B.C. Account Manager for Canada Law Book has recently retired after 42 years, and many librarians paid tribute to Peter by sharing anecdotes and memories from years past. Peter’s service with librarians is the epitome of what every librarian and every vendor should strive for together in their next meeting, training session, or contract negotiation.

The SLA conference opened my mind up to new and exciting technology, and it sharpened my interpersonal skills in working with vendors. I am truly grateful to have been a recipient of the Peter Bark Bursary and for the opportunity to attend my first conference.

Kathy Barry works as a library technician at Farris LLP.

Want to find out more?

For more SLA conference session summaries, visit

<http://technorati.com/tag/sla2008>

VALL Review

VALL Member Survey: Conferences

Susannah Tredwell

Many thanks to all those people who took the time to answer the survey on performance reviews. We had 41 responses to the survey. Of those people 26 (or 63.4%) had attended or were planning to attend a conference this year.

Most of the respondents received some assistance from their organization to attend conferences; 36 people (90%) had all or some of their costs covered. However, there were limitations: some people were limited to only one conference a year, another person commented that “I usually only get to attend parts of a conference it is held in local community i.e. CALL when it is in Vancouver or Victoria”, a third stated that room sharing was one of the requirements when obtaining approval for conference costs” and a fourth noted that “only Librarians are offered paid attendance to conferences [...] more focus should be given to Library Technicians”.

Of the 28 people who answered the question “what conference do you normally attend?”, 78.6% opted for CALL and 28.6% for SLA. Other conferences of interest included AALL, HLABC, BCLA, Internet Librarian, and CHLA. Respondents emphasized that location had a big effect on the choice of conference: generally, the closer, the better.

The most important part of the conference experience was considered to be to “Learn what other libraries are doing” (81.6% of people who answered the question). Other answers included: “a chance to look at library issues for differences and commonalities, and just to see library life from a broader perspective/different point of view”, “refresh knowledge of sources, strategies, skills and return home energized - learn from session leaders and other attendees”, “move out of the narrow world of your own library for a little while” and “the speakers who share their experiences, lessons learned and service initiatives provide valued information. I also greatly appreciate hearing the speakers from related fields or areas of expertise whose talks give valuable insight into an area which we are involved with.”

And finally, the advice to those who are going to their first conference:

- Any ‘first timer’ event is well worth attending. Make it a point to get to these and meet new people!
- Ask questions.
- Bring comfortable shoes. Every “tips for first timers” guide you see will mention this, but it cannot be overstated. You’ll sit all day during the sessions, but you’ll want to explore the city you’re visiting and the last thing you want is blisters holding you back. Make sure to go to at least one session that has no face-value relevance to your job. Attending a conference is a chance for you to be reinvigorated and rediscover why you’re passionate about library work. Don’t force yourself to attend sessions you think will be boring. And don’t be afraid to leave a session if it doesn’t live up to your expectations (or if you find the speaker annoying). Lastly, don’t pack your schedule so tight that you don’t have time for *you*. Don’t feel guilty about not getting up for 7:30 breakfast meetings. You won’t enjoy the conference experience if you are running all over the place, too tired to even catch your breath.
- Comfortable shoes! Attend as many events as possible.
- Do anything laid on for first timers. Try to go with a buddy or connect with someone you know - not to cling together but for support and to debrief as the conference progresses.
- Don’t be shy!

(Continued on page 16)

VALL Member Survey: Conferences, cont.

(Continued from page 15)

- Don't sit with your Vancouver friends; try to meet as many people from other parts of Canada as you can. Don't feel shy; library people are very welcoming.
- Enjoy yourself and network as much as you can or feel comfortable doing.
- Enjoy!
- Go to as many sessions as you possibly can that relate even tangentially to work you do in your library. Don't skip out and go shopping; you may miss the best session or an opportunity to meet a mentor or a distant colleague who will be your friend for life. Take chances and go out to dinner or sit for lunch with new friends rather than familiar ones. Keep a big welcoming smile on your face and speak up when you have something to say.
- Go to everything you can. Talk to everyone. Ask questions.
- Look at the program ahead of time and plan what you are going attend - there are a lot of programs at the same time. You are not going to be able to see everything. Network. Take time off and enjoy the city you are in. Go for a run!
- Make a concerted effort to meet people. When you need information in the future, you can indicate that "we met at xxxx conference ... I need information on and I hope you can help me or steer me in the right direction.
- Network.
- Plan ahead and take good notes.
- Plan ahead of time key sessions you want to attend - plot out key exhibitors you want to be sure to check out - attend the open houses to network - chat up other attendees in line ups, at sessions... - if a session is a disappointment, leave and attend something else - your time is precious.
- Read Stephen Abram's Conference Tips: http://stephenslighthouse.sirsidynix.com/archives/2006/05/conference_tips.html
- Take business cards, network, if there is an option to do so: volunteer, attend social events, and take notes at the sessions.
- Try to meet and talk with as many people as possible and share your business cards!
- Try to take your time. You can get caught up in rushing everywhere.

"Don't feel shy; library people are very welcoming."

"If a session is a disappointment, leave and attend something else— your time is precious."

Is there a subject you would like to see the VALL Review cover? Contact the editors, Susannah Tredwell and Beth Galbraith, and let them know.

VALL Review Newsletter Article Content Submission Guidelines

We're glad you'd like to write for the *VALL Review*! Please take a look at the guidelines below and contact the *VALL Review* Editors if you have any further questions. You do not have to be a VALL member to write for us. Anyone is welcome to contribute to the *VALL Review* as long as you meet the guidelines below. Thanks for your support and interest!

Purpose of VALL Review

- To provide short news and articles on library information and knowledge management developments of interest to VALL members with a priority focus on legal information and related issues concerning legal sector.
- To highlight resources of interest to VALL which would be useful to the legal community and for professional library staff development.

Authors are advised to submit their draft articles that meet the minimal criteria:

- 1) In Microsoft Word, plain text or RTF.
- 2) Maximum of up to 800 words for full articles.
- 3) Single spaced with paragraphs.
- 4) Functional URLs and corresponding footnote bibliographic information for further reading.
- 5) Identification of author, their official position title and parent organization.

Publishers and vendors should only highlight for submission:

- 6) No more than 3-4 resources of key value per issue. Title, edition, author and projected price is helpful.
- 7) Of value, would be very recent new product developments that the vendor has not yet publicly released or the vendor would like feedback from its customers.

Note: If a vendor has already released public marketing information to all customers on its corporate web site, *VALL Review* editors will exercise rights to determine if there is sufficient space to include the submitted information, in light of other VALL content publishing priorities.

The *VALL Review* is the official newsletter of the Vancouver Association of Law Libraries. VALL is composed of members of the law library community interested in discussing issues and sharing ideas. Opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent VALL policy or position. Unsolicited submissions are welcome. VALL reserves the right to edit submissions.

ISSN 1712-065X

Vancouver Association of Law Libraries

PO Box 48663, Bentall Centre

Vancouver, BC V7X 1A1

<http://www.vall.vancouver.bc.ca>