

ASL LIBRARY NEWS

February 1, 2009

Volume 12 Number 7

What's New in the Library?

- We have a brand-new lineup of "Get REAL!" (Research and Electronic-Assisted Learning) classes for this semester. If you've been dreading the days when your Lexis and Westlaw subscriptions come to an end, sit in on our classes covering two low-cost databases, Loislaw and CaseFinder. Later on in the month, Ethan will give an overview of finding agency regulations, and he'll finish off the month by providing tips on using your ASL-provided Google account for more than just e-mail! Our schedule is posted on our web site (<http://www.asl.edu/library/classes.php>); the short sessions will meet at the Reference Desk on Wednesdays at 4:30 pm.
- We're trying out a new service this semester to provide more ways of asking us for help: we're now available through instant messaging. If your IM client allows you to add usernames from another service (like Google Talk does), feel free to add **ASL_Reference@meebo.org** as a buddy! If you can't add us in your normal IM program, you can use the special IM page on our web site at <http://www.asl.edu/library/im.php> to chat with us. We'll generally be monitoring the account Sunday through Thursday, from noon to about 6 pm. Let us know what you think!
- We have some Westlaw and Lexis certification training scheduled for the month of February. Westlaw Reference Attorney Manager Jeremy Pischke will be running "Prepare to Practice" and Westlaw certification classes the week of February 9. The next week, Lexis Representative Scott Hite will be offering similar classes. Stop by the Circulation Desk to sign up for these classes!
- If you're struggling to keep up with your classes, consider visiting the CALI web site for tutorials. The Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction has over 700 tutorials for law school classes (several new lessons on criminal law and procedure appeared on the web site recently). ASL's authorization code is **[not in online version!]** – check out the CALI web site, which is <http://www.cali.org> If you have questions, stop by the Reference Desk and ask a librarian for assistance.

	LexisNexis	Westlaw	
	Heather Cawthron (3L) hcawthron09@asl.edu	Nate Colburn (3L) ncolburn219@aol.com	Sam Hughart (3L) dhughart09@asl.edu
Monday	3:00 pm – 6:00 pm	<i>no scheduled hours</i>	1:30 pm – 3:30 pm
Tuesday	<i>no scheduled hours</i>	<i>no scheduled hours</i>	11:00 am – 2:00 pm
Wednesday	10:00 am – 5:00 pm	9:00 am – 11:00 am; 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm	12:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Thursday	<i>no scheduled hours</i>	10:00 am – 1:00 pm	1:15 pm – 2:15 pm
Friday	<i>no scheduled hours</i>	12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	<i>no scheduled hours</i>

Other News

- We found a few neat web sites devoted to hints to make your legal writing a bit better. The Legal Writing Blog noted "Ten Underused Microsoft Word Keyboard Shortcuts" (which includes the bonus tip explaining how to set Word to automatically save documents every minute). The author of that blog has also written a paper that was recently uploaded to SSRN (Social Sciences Research Network). It's called "Ethical Legal Writing," and it discusses "real cases in which lawyers got into trouble for poor legal writing." Then there's "Typography for Lawyers," which offers advice on grammatical marks and fonts. (Please be aware your LP professor might not agree with all of the recommendations listed on this site, although most of them appeared to be consistent with *Bluebook* and *ALWD* practice.)
 - <http://blog.legalwriting.net/2008/09/30/useful-keyboard-shortcuts.asp>
 - http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1324821
 - <http://www.typographyforlawyers.com>
- The topic of legal research doesn't appear in case law all that often – when it does, it's usually because a court is criticizing the lawyer for failing to perform competent research. But one recent case dealt with whether attorneys can be reimbursed for electronic research. In a shareholder suit against Coca-Cola, the judge was adamantly against that: "The Court is of the opinion that charging separately for use of a research service is akin to charging for the use of a case law reporter. That is, the research service is a tool, much like a computer or a pen, and this Court considers the use of such a service part of a firm's overhead." Therefore, the \$94,000 in electronic research submitted for reimbursement was disallowed. (Perhaps it didn't help that the lawyers spent an average of almost \$1,500 per person per night during the lawsuit, which the court found to be either excessive or a miscalculation.) Read the court's holding at *Carpenters Health & Welfare Fund v. Coca-Cola*, 2008 WL 4997199 (N.D.Ga.), or read the background of the story at <http://www.law.com/jsp/article.jsp?id=1202426190743>
- Most television stations will be switching to digital-only signals very soon. The transition is currently scheduled for February 17, 2009 (although there was a last-minute extension: older TVs will not automatically go blank, but will receive information about this transition – and any emergency notifications – through mid-March). If you get your TV signals through cable or satellite, or if you just use your TV to watch videos or play games, you are not impacted. But if you (or, perhaps, your parents or grandparents) get over-the-air channels, you'll need to make sure your TV either has an internal digital tuner or you must purchase a converter box. For more information about the change, see the government's own web site at <http://www.dtv.gov/>

The [ASL Library News](#) (ISSN 1535-539X) is published monthly during the academic year by the Appalachian School of Law Library, Grundy VA 24614. Uncredited stories are written by Chris King, Public Services Librarian. If you would like to respond to any story in this newsletter, please contact Chris or leave a message in the upstairs suggestion box.