

ASL LIBRARY NEWS

September 1, 2009

Volume 13 Number 2

What's New in the Library?

- The Library's Circulation Desk will only be open from 2 pm to 6 pm on Monday, September 7 (Labor Day). Although card access for the weekend remains the same (9 am to midnight on Saturday, 11 am to midnight on Sunday), card access is limited to 2 pm to midnight on Labor Day itself. We will have our normal Sunday reference coverage, so if you're here working on a project and you get stuck, you can get a little help!
- We've been adding to our collection of research guides – we now have suggestions on starting your research in electronic discovery, entertainment law, environmental law, and tax law. Look for these short guides – and over two dozen more – in our Information Station (across from the Circulation Desk) or on our web site at <http://www.asl.edu/library/> under the Publications link.
- Now that your law school classes are starting to become "routine," here's a way to test yourself to make sure you're learning the key topics: Sign up for the over 800 CALI (Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction) tutorials at <http://www.cali.org/> (you'll need the authorization code of **[not in online version!]**). If you have a slow Internet connection at home, stop by our Reference Desk to pick up a copy of this year's DVD with all the lessons (yes, it even works on Macs!).

Reference Notes

by Ethan Atwood, Reference Librarian

This month we'll be providing three of our "Get REAL!" (Research and Electronic-Assisted Learning) tutorials. Each "Get REAL" class lasts about fifteen minutes and covers a specific research topic. For each topic we'll give you a hands-on demonstration of the research process. This September we'll be demonstrating the different kinds of secondary sources available. On Tuesday, September 15th, we'll begin with treatises and encyclopedias; then on September 22nd we'll demonstrate ALRs; and on September 29th we'll demonstrate law reviews. A complete schedule is available at <http://www.asl.edu/library/classes.php>. If you're interested, just stop by the Library's Reference Desk on Tuesdays at 4:45 pm.

Other News

- If you want to know what reading materials your professors put on Reserve, use our online catalog at <http://catalog.asl.edu/> and click on "Instructor Search." Type in the last name of your professor, and then pick the class. (If the class isn't listed, there are no items on Reserve yet.) We also have paper-based binders near the Circulation Desk which list materials by professors' names.
- Generally, we save our U.S. Supreme Court preview for our October newsletter (the first day of their new term is the first Monday in October). But for the second straight year, the Supremes will start work a bit early, holding a somewhat unusual September argument. The case is about a movie critical of Hillary Clinton that one ideological group wanted to air during the 2008 presidential primary season. A new campaign-spending law (McCain-Feingold) prohibits certain political "documentaries" during certain times in a campaign season. The group sued, not only arguing the obvious First Amendment issue, but also for some funding disclosure rules. The High Court took the case last year, but during oral arguments, discovered this case did impact more than "free speech," so the justices ordered more briefs to be filed as to the constitutionality of their prior campaign-finance holdings. The special session is to be held on September 9; a final decision is expected by next summer. If you're interested in *Citizens United v. FEC* (08-205), you can find links to all the briefs filed in the case (including about 50 amicus briefs!) plus a copy of the original oral argument transcript at the American Bar Association's web site at <http://www.abanet.org/publiced/preview/briefs/sept09.shtml#citizens>
- This story caught our eye a few years ago (we mentioned it in the August 2007 *Library News*): a contract written in blood. After his companies failed after being loaned a bunch of money, one guy pricked his finger and wrote on a barroom napkin in his own blood, "I will repay you to the best of my ability." The money lender sued after a year, hoping to get his money back. In 2007, the district court judge found there was no enforceable contract due to a lack of consideration (he also quoted Nietzsche: "Blood is the worst of all testimonies to the truth"). Of course there was an appeal. The money lender claimed the consideration was his forbearance of not suing. But even on appeal, the blood oath turned out to be as valid as an oral contract. The failed business owner never received the money personally (his businesses did), nor did he ever guarantee that he would repay this debt in full. Perhaps those old gangster movies have it right, skipping the bloody napkins and going straight for the concrete shoes The appeal of *Kim v. Son*, sadly, is an unpublished decision, but if you Google the California case number (G039818), you should be able to find it.

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.