UGA AMICUS BRIEFS

From the Director
Professor Ann Puckett

In This Issue

If you've been around the law school awhile, you may have heard one of my recurring complaints: this library is out of space! We are so desperately short of book storage space that we've spent the last four years discarding redundant and superseded books just to make enough room for the new arrivals.

Study space for students is far too crowded and noisy. We need more carrels, fewer chairs at each study table, more space between tables, and, most of all, group study rooms.

Several other space concerns are less visible, but just as critical. Computer labs are too small and not very adaptable for teaching. The Law Library's priceless collection of rare books and manuscripts is kept under conditions that guarantee its deterioration. Some staff work spaces are so cramped they affect work quality, and there is no room for staff expansion.

We have explored a number of possibilities for solving our space problem, without much promise. We can't go underground – too much rock. We can't go up – insufficient foundation on the building. We can't go out – not enough space around our existing buildings. We are nearing the end of the number of books we can throw away without damaging the collection beyond reprieve. We are replacing some hard copy with microfiche, but that is too expensive to do on a very large scale, and not very popular with library users either. We could store books off-site, but no suitable space exists, and building new space is expensive wherever you build it.

Our recent ABA site evaluation confirmed my assessment of the criticality of our space problems, so imagine my elation when I learned the main University library, whose space problems are even more severe than ours, is planning to build a building to house all its special collections AND a high-density book storage facility. What's more, they want us to help with the project, in return for which we would share the use of the building.

The new facility won't solve all our space problems, but with less space devoted to book storage we should be able to make some positive changes in user space. For instance, we might remove one bay of compact shelves and put in tables so you can use the books in the basement instead of lugging them upstairs. The tiny rare book room we have now could add to the computer lab or become a group study room.

These changes are some years in the future, probably longer than any currently enrolled student will see, but they are a ray of hope for a library staff that has struggled for years to cope with our limited space.

I hope your holidays were relaxing and joyous. Have a great semester!

Nolo Suit Dropped
Anne Burnett

The Texas Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee (UPLC) terminated its investigation of self-help legal publisher Nolo Press in September, 1999. The action ends Nolo's long battle with the UPLC, which was examining whether Nolo's and other publishers' self-help products constituted the unauthorized practice of law. In response to the investigation, Nolo filed a lawsuit seeking declaratory judgment clarifying Nolo's right to sell its products in Texas. The American Association of Law Libraries and the Texas Library Association joined Nolo in the suit (as reported in the August 1999 *Amicus Briefs*).

The UPLC based its decision to terminate the investigation on the June 1999 enactment by the Texas Legislature of H.B. 1507, which specifically excludes self-help legal products from the definition of the "practice of law" as long as the products conspicuously state that they are "not a substitute for the advice of an attorney." Upon notification by the UPLC of its decision, Nolo's attorneys announced that they would dismiss the lawsuit.

For copies of H.B. 1507, the UPLC's statements, a chronology of events, and Nolo's viewpoint, see http://www.nolopress.com/texas/index.html.

New Pathfinders on the Website

The Library has recently added several new pathfinders to the library's website. *Pathfinders* are simply guides to finding research materials in discrete areas, developed to help students and other researchers find books and articles in fields with which they are not familiar.

Ann Burnett has compiled *Selected Materials in the UGA Law Library on Legal Research, Analysis & Writing*, a guide to the several dozen treatises in the Library which consider legal research techniques, legal analysis and the various forms of written presentation of research findings. These works will be especially useful for those who wish to improve their legal writing abilities or make more effective legal arguments.

Another new pathfinder is *Legal Research Meta-Indexes and Web Directories*, produced by Fran Norton. In it, Fran compares a number of the top meta-indexes, or "indexes of indexes," now available on the Web. These databases — such as Cornell's Legal Information Institute, FindLaw and American Law Sources On-line — are a way to deal with the haphazard findings which often result from keyword searching; by indexing the information in various legal fields, they allow researchers to focus or fine-tune their searches. Fran not only lists and links to these meta-indexes, but also discusses the relative merits and disadvantages of each database.

Maureen Cahill has gathered together an enormous directory of the various websites and databases which might be useful to a lawyer or law student in *Internet Legal Research -- CLE Seminar Links*. This pathfinder collects in one site all the many Web resources discussed by the reference librarians in their much-praised seminar on Internet research. The list includes, among others, sites that offer federal and state cases, legislation and regulations; Georgia resources; company information; and foreign and international materials. Since each of these hundreds of resources is accessible through a hot link, the pathfinder makes an excellent starting point for doing legal research of many kinds.

These materials, along with other pathfinders, may be accessed from the Library's homepage by looking under the heading *Publications* and clicking on *Pathfinders*.

From the Computer Labs
Carol Watson

As you may know, all of the Law School's computing services is supported by the Law Library. During the past nine months, as part of our Y2K preparations, the Law Library staff has been busy converting the Law School's administrative database to a Y2K vendor-supported system. The Law School's administrative database is used to support our admissions, legal career services, student affairs, registrar, alumni events and development.

Our previous database was developed in-house using a DOS database software package. In addition to being non-Y2K compliant, we had outgrown this system for quite some time.   For continuity of support and future product development, the Law School administrative staff made the decision to seek a well-known vendor for our administrative database rather than develop another in-house system.   We also knew that we wanted our new system to be an integrated database. In other words, we wanted a student's record to move from admissions to registrar and student affairs and then upon graduation to alumni.

After an extensive search including many lengthy vendor presentations, we selected CARS Information Systems as our database vendor. CARS has a large installed base of successfully completed systems. CARS is also dedicated to developing web-centric technology for our information needs.

We have spent more than 3000 staff hours working on the implementation of our CARS database. Our admissions office is currently "live" with the CARS system. The Career Services and Registrar offices are "going live" by the time you read this article. The final step is to implement the Alumni offices as soon as possible.   Many of the administrative staff members have been working very hard to make this transition successful. As we build our administrative database with applicant, student and alumni information, we know that the hard work will bring great returns to you as a student and future alumni.

Lexis and Westlaw Training Sessions Offered

Beginning on Tuesday, January 18, the representatives of the two best-known legal databases will conduct training sessions for first-year students here in the Library. The sessions, which will last approximately fifty minutes, are designed to teach new users the basic techniques of searching for cases, statutes, articles and other materials on Westlaw and Lexis-Nexis.

Account representative Nan Harley, who will demonstrate research techniques for Westlaw, believes the sessions will be invaluable for both student work and later in the practice of law. She expects to discuss, among other topics, "how to retrieve documents by issue using a variety of different search tools, and how to move confidently around our web-based research system, which will save both time and aggravation."

Similarly, finding relevant cases and statutes by "targeting your legal issue, identifying an appropriate source, and formulating your search request" are among the skills to be taught by Suzy DeVane, Lexis-Nexis education specialist and UGA Law garduate, will teach for Lexis. "Information is power," she says, "and Lexis makes information easy to use and access."

There are enough sessions scheduled to give every first-year student one session with each company. While attendance at the sessions is not mandatory, the training will cover all the topics which may be tested on the Westlaw and Lexis-Nexis Competency Test, successful completion of which is a prerequisite for getting fully activated Lexis and Westlaw passwords.

The classes will be offered for five days, beginning on Tuesday, January 18 and running through Monday, January 24. Students should reserve class times on the sign-up sheets which will be posted outside the Dunlap Room on the third floor of the Law School, after 1:00 p.m. on Friday, January 14.

Library Hours

Regular Hours:

Monday - Friday	7:30 a.m. - Midnight
Saturday - Sunday	8:00 a.m. - Midnight

Spring Semester:

Thursday - Friday, January 13-14	Regular Hours
Saturday, January 15	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, January 16	CLOSED
Monday, January 17 (MLK Holiday)	6:00 p.m. - Midnight
Tuesday, January 18 - Thursday, March 2	Regular Hours

Spring Break:	March 6 - 10