



# DE NOVO

The Newsletter of  
The Law Library of Louisiana

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Summer 2008



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## NEW STAFF MEMBER FOR THE LIBRARY

The Law Library of Louisiana welcomes its newest staff member, Tara Lombardi, who is a recent graduate of the School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University. Tara worked as a student intern in the Law Library's technical services department for two years while attending LSU, so her face may look familiar. Law librarianship seemed like the natural path to follow during her internship here, so she quickly got involved in several law library organizations including the New Orleans Association of Law Libraries, the American Association of Law Libraries and the Southeastern Chapter of AALL.

Tara is the newest member of the Reference Department, where she is responsible for Interlibrary Loan, and will handle some collection development activities as well. She is particularly interested in using her knowledge of Web 2.0 to publicize the services offered by the Law Library of Louisiana to our users throughout the state and beyond, and is currently working on a reference resources wiki.

A New Orleans native, Tara holds a B.A. in English from the University of New Orleans and resides with her husband, 4-year old son, and two dogs in Marrero. Tara is an avid moviegoer who also enjoys reading novels and is anxiously anticipating the release of the final *Twilight* series book. Say hello to Tara next time you're in the library! δ



## ELECTRONIC RESOURCES IN THE LAW LIBRARY PART II

by Katie Nachod

In the Spring 2008 issue of *De Novo*, I described two of the law library's electronic resources, Thomson Gale LegalForms, which provides access to a wide selection of Louisiana-specific and multi-state legal forms, and HeinOnline, which provides access to full-text legal periodicals and to various legal historical documents and treatises. Next up for discussion are LegalTrac and WilsonWeb.

(Please note that you cannot access either of these resources from your home or office computer, unless your office is in the Louisiana Supreme Court.)

LegalTrac is one of the products available under the InfoTrac umbrella, a group of indexes created by the Information Access Company, which was bought by the Gale Company, now a division of Thomson Reuters.

*continued on page 5*

# A DAY OF DESPERATION & MADNESS

## THE NEW ORLEANS MECHANICS' INSTITUTE RIOT, PART II

by Jason Kruppa

After the ratification of the 1864 Constitution, various factions advocated a revision or complete rewrite of the document, and there were certainly legitimate reasons for such a move. The fraudulent practices of the convention delegates and a questionable voter turnout, influenced by the Banks-Hahn faction, were prime among them. Additionally, only part of the state had been able to vote on the ratification and, perhaps most important of all to a state that wished to be readmitted to the Union, the federal government had refused to recognize the constitution. Though the question of a new constitutional convention had been raised in two separate sessions, the legislature had been unable to come to an agreement regarding how to proceed on the matter.

Ironically, but perhaps not unpredictably, the group that finally chose to take action was composed of members of the original convention. Citing the provision for reconvening adopted in 1864 in case ratification failed, a number of the former delegates decided to revive the convention. This action put the provision to use in a way not originally intended, giving the delegates a



*A.P. Dostie*

shaky foundation at best. When Edmund Durell, the president of the convention and the only one authorized to revive it, refused to

do so for fear such action would result in a riot, the legality of the situation appeared even more suspect.

Undaunted, the delegates chose as their president Judge Rufus



*Justice Rufus K. Howell*

K. Howell, a Louisiana Supreme Court Justice and an original member of the convention. On June 26, 1866, only 39 of the 96 members of the original convention met, choosing July 30 at the Mechanics' Institute for the first meeting. The motives of the delegates were also suspect. William Pitt Kellogg, later a governor of the state, characterized the delegates as political adventurers, questioning their assertion of radical values as nothing more than a convenient means by which to pursue their own personal ambitions. Some of the delegates, in fact, had been secessionists and Confederate office holders before the fall of New Orleans.

Simply drafting a new constitution, even one that met the requirements of the federal Congress for readmission to the Union, certainly didn't guarantee ratification, or even recognition. The convention seemed unlikely to have any legitimate impact, then, until Governor Wells made his support for it known publicly in early July. Given the stated goal of the drafters to use the document to disenfranchise ex-Confederates, their political ri-

vals, while enfranchising blacks, the Governor's official endorsement effectively galvanized the convention's opponents.

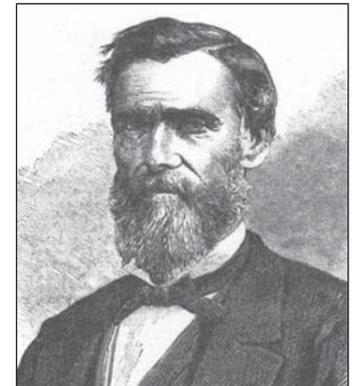
The anger that began building among certain pockets of the white population as a result of Wells's approval increased when the conventionists called a meeting on the evening of Friday, July 27, at the Mechanics' Institute. In addition to the delegates inside, 1,500 blacks gathered outside and were addressed by several speakers, one of whom was A.P. Dostie (see part I). Varying accounts of the speeches, some of which were described by the local papers as inciting the blacks to arm themselves on the day of the convention and be prepared to defend themselves, did nothing to quiet the white populace, and over the weekend tensions continued to grow.

In spite of the potential danger, the local authorities decided to allow the convention to meet without interference. Attempting to ensure a peaceful gathering, Mayor John T. Monroe issued a statement, which ran in the morning papers of July 30, urging citizens to stay away from the convention. Monroe also had the police ready themselves so they might maintain order, and the morning of the convention the Lieutenant Governor asked the local military commander to have troops in place at the Mechanics' Institute.

Shortly after noon – six hours before the convention was scheduled to begin – Howell had the roll taken and found only 25 delegates present. Lacking a quorum, he called a recess until 1:30 p.m., and the sergeant-at-arms went to find the missing members. During the recess, nearly 200 “supporters or observers,” both black and white, began to fill the hall, while a procession of between 100 and 150 black men marched toward the Institute. [Vandal, 172] As the procession

moved along its route, white bystanders on several occasions attacked some of the marchers, and by the time the procession reached the Institute, the crowd had become loud and disorderly.

While the gathering was initially peaceful, by 1:00 pm a fight had broken out, sparked by a young white boy throwing bricks at some of the blacks. Within minutes, shots were fired and the whole scene degenerated into “a street battle.” [Vandal, 177] Many blacks began to flee, while some blacks and whites ran inside the Institute to take cover. The white crowd and the policemen, who were now part of the mob, began firing into the Institute and finally charged the building, continuing to fire their guns despite all indications by the conventionists and their supporters that they wished to surrender. Those who managed to escape the building, both black and white,



*Judge Edmund Durell*

were attacked and beaten by the mob outside, and in many cases killed. A.P. Dostie, targeted because of his rumored incitement of blacks the previous Friday, was dragged from the Institute, “shot, stabbed, beaten and left to die.” [Vandal, 179] Former Governor Hahn was taken from police custody by the mob and also beaten. Violence erupted around the city, with blacks far from the Institute assaulted on the street and in their businesses and homes.

The military finally arrived just before 4 pm and restored order, placing the city under martial law. Estimates from several

different investigations put the number of dead blacks at between 50 and 100, with the wounded blacks numbering at least 300. Between 30 and 50 policemen were wounded. The official report submitted to the military estimated approximately 100 "friends of the convention" had been wounded, half of that number severely, while nearly 50 were estimated to have been killed.

Although a local tragedy, the Mechanics' Institute riot sent

shock waves throughout the nation. The issues that precipitated the riot were a reflection of larger political and social struggles, and various factions cast the riot in a light intended to strengthen their own agendas. When one crowd in Ohio heckled President Andrew Johnson about the riot during a speech, Johnson's attempt to blame the Radicals in Congress for the tragedy elicited boos and sneers. The riot weakened Johnson's case for his Reconstruction policies and provided one more tool for Congress to use to chip

away at his presidential powers. The following year, Congress impeached Johnson and took over Reconstruction completely, requiring Southern states to call constitutional conventions establishing Negro suffrage and to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. The federally mandated Louisiana constitution of 1868 finally enfranchised black men. The state would, however, adopt another constitution in 1898 revoking all political rights, including suffrage, which the 1868 document had granted to blacks.

The struggle for black suffrage that had contributed to the 1866 riot would thus continue halfway into the next century.

#### Sources:

Vandal, Gilles. *The New Orleans Riot of 1866: Anatomy of a Tragedy*. Lafayette LA: The Center for Louisiana Studies, 1983

Hollandsworth, James G., Jr. *An Absolute Massacre: The New Orleans Race Riot of July 30, 1866*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2001. δ

## VALUING COMPANION ANIMALS IN LOUISIANA

by Marie Erickson

In honor of the ninth anniversary of Bring Your Dog to Work Day, <http://www.takeyourdog.com/>, here's something to refer to when your client's neighbor shoots Minou or Fideaux.

Animals are undoubtedly corporeal movables in Louisiana, according to La. Civ. Code Art. 440, but our jurisprudence seems to suggest that they are a species of property distinct from the living-room sofa.

Louisiana courts have recognized emotional damages related to an animal's death. In *Peloquin v. Calcasieu Parish Police Jury*, 367 So.2d 1246 (La. Ct. App. 3d Cir.1979), the Third Circuit recognized the plaintiff's right to sue for damages for conversion of George, a foundling alley cat. The cat was trapped by the next door neighbor, who had borrowed a trap from the pound for that purpose. When the neighbor was successful, she brought cat and trap to the pound, which euthanized George.

The court relied on *Lincecum v. Smith*, 287 So.2d 625 (La. Ct. App. 3d Cir. 1974), in which a neighbor picked up the plaintiff's sickly Pekinese and took it to be euthanized without looking for her owner, and on *Brown v. Crocker*, 139 So.2d 779 (La. Ct. App. 2d Cir 1962), where the



Sweetpea with Marie Erickson

court allowed emotional-distress damages to the plaintiff's minor son, who had seen his Quarter Horse mare suffer when she was wounded.

For you civilians, the Third Circuit's harmonization of the common-law tort of conversion with the (since repealed) Louisiana Civil Code Articles 3450 and 3454 to allow the plaintiffs to proceed as possessors is even more interesting. We would now rely on Louisiana Civil Code Articles 3412 (occupancy of a corporeal movable), 3418 (abandoned things), and 3419 (diligent effort made to find owner, no luck after 3 years). However, according to 3417, privately owned domestic animals are not subject to occupancy.

However we've always valued our pets for more than their mere market value. Consider *Sentell v. New Orleans & C.R. Co.*, 166 U.S. 698 (1897), where the plaintiff appealed all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court to recover damages for the death of Countess Lona, a Newfoundland bitch, who was struck and killed by the defendant's streetcar. Mr. Sentell must have valued her as more than an object to go to all that expense. Unfortunately, he was unsuccessful.

All these cases required an appeal, sometimes more than one. The practice of animal law may be more lucrative than you think. And the object of the litigation may just reward you with a big, wet kiss. δ

### LAW LIBRARY PRICE LIST

Self service copies  
 photocopiers \$0.15  
 fiche/film to paper \$0.15  
 printer copies \$0.15  
 (no charge for cite lists)

The minimum charge for all orders filled by library staff is \$3.00. Orders for \$3.00 or more use the prices below.

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Interlibrary loans: \$10.00 plus lender charges, if any

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Westlaw/Lexis: Per-minute charges are \$9.00 for regular files, \$12.80 for allfiles, and \$19.00 for super allfiles.

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by Miriam Childs

The Law Library is pleased to announce that Mr. Louis V. de la Vergne has donated a copy of the 1967 photolithographic reprint of the De La Vergne Volume to our Louisiana Civil Code collection. Mr. de la Vergne attended a production of LSU Law Professor Paul Baier's play, "Father Chief Justice": *E. D. White and the Constitution*, sponsored by the Louisiana Supreme Court Historical Society and staged at the Supreme Court on May 22, 2008. While in town for this event, Mr. de la Vergne visited the Law Library and noticed that we lacked the 1967 reprint. Like others who patronized the library in its former cramped space, Mr. de la Vergne was amazed to see the transformation at its present location on Royal Street. He particularly enjoyed viewing the beautifully restored portraits of his ancestors, Judge Joachim Bermudez and Chief Justice Edward Bermudez, which are displayed prominently in the library.

The De La Vergne Volume brings us back to March 31, 1808, the day that the *Digest of the Civil Laws Now in Force in the Territory of Orleans* was accepted by the Orleans Territorial legislature. Louis Moreau-Lislet and James Brown had been commissioned by the Legislature to prepare a civil code for the Territory based on the laws then in effect. The laws that remained were colonial laws which had been modified over time, based on Spanish civil law. Because of its simplified format, the redactors used the

# THE DE LA VERGNE VOLUME

Napoleonic Code Civil of 1804 and its *Projet de l'An VIII* (1800) as a model for the Digest's structure, organization, and wording. Where the French legal concepts were similar, Moreau-Lislet and Brown adapted text from the *Code Civil* or the *Projet*. Where the French concepts differed, the authors used wording from other legal texts or drafted the necessary text. The *Digest* was the second attempt to codify civil law after Napoleon's *Code Civil* of 1804.

Four manuscript volumes containing Moreau-Lislet's notes on the sources of the laws found in the *Digest* are known to be in existence. The volume from 1814, also called the De La Vergne Volume, is the most complete set of Moreau-Lislet's notes, and is

Vergne family through Hugues de la Vergne, a contemporary of Moreau-Lislet. It has been passed down generation after generation since then. In 1938, Tulane Law School learned of the volume through Pierre de la Vergne, who shared it with Professor F. F. Stone. The first reference to the Volume appeared in a 1941 article by Professor Mitchell Franklin, published in the *Tulane Law Review*. Two articles covering the origin and importance of the volume appeared in both the *Louisiana Law Review* and *Tulane Law Review* in 1958.

Professors Franklin of Tulane and Joseph Dainow of Louisiana State University Law School discussed with the de la Vergne family the possibility of reproducing the volume in order to make it

first time, a searchable English transcription of Moreau-Lislet's notes. Digitization of the De La Vergne Volume represents the next step towards increasing the volume's accessibility to researchers and scholars. (For site address see below.)

The Law Library is honored by Mr. de la Vergne's generous gift, which will be kept in the library's Rare Book Room.

## Sources:

Batiza, Rodolfo. "The Louisiana Civil Code of 1808 : Its Actual Sources and Present Relevance," 46 *Tulane Law Review* 4

Civil Law Online  
[www.law.lsu.edu/index.cfm?geaux=civillawonline.maindigest](http://www.law.lsu.edu/index.cfm?geaux=civillawonline.maindigest)

*A Digest of the Civil Laws Now in Force...* The de la Vergne Volume, reprint preface (1967)

Kilbourne, Richard H. *A History of the Louisiana Civil Code : the Formative Years, 1803-1839*

Levasseur, Alain A. "The Major Periods of Louisiana Legal History," 41 *Loyola Law Review* 585

– "Grandeur or Mockery," 42 *Loyola Law Review* 647

– "A 'Civil Law' Lawyer : Louis Casimir Elisabeth Moreau-Lislet," 42 *Loyola Law Review* 203

– *Louis Casimir Elisabeth Moreau-Lislet, Foster Father of Louisiana Civil Law*

Pascal, Robert A. "Sources of the Digest of 1808 : A Reply to Professor Batiza," 46 *Tulane Law Review* 603

Yiannopoulos, A.N. "The Early Sources of Louisiana Law : Critical Appraisal of a Controversy," in *An Uncommon Experience : Law and Judicial Institutions in Louisiana, 1803-2003*, pp. 93-108. 8

*The De La Vergne Volume brings us back to the day that the Digest of the Civil Laws Now in Force in the Territory of Orleans was accepted by the Orleans Territorial legislature.*

considered to be the definitive collection. The De La Vergne Volume consists of a copy of the 1808 *Digest* with Moreau-Lislet's notes on the sources of the laws interleaved between the laws written in English on the left hand side and in French on the right. Opposite the English text, Moreau-Lislet lists Roman and Spanish laws that are related to the chapter's subject. Opposite the French text, Moreau-Lislet gives citations to Spanish or Roman legal works, such as the *Siete Partidas* and the *Fueros Reales*, that provided the substance of Spanish colonial Louisiana laws. The De La Vergne Volume was bound in high-quality leather, with Moreau-Lislet's name embossed in gold on the cover. The volume first came into the de la

more widely accessible to scholars. In 1966, Professor Robert Pascal of LSU Law School and Louis V. de la Vergne agreed upon a plan for reproduction. A photolithographic reprint was published by LSU Law School and Tulane University School of Law in 1967. This first printing had a limited distribution. Claitor's Book Store in Baton Rouge made the volume commercially available in 1971 with a second reprint and recently printed a bicentennial edition as well.

Also in honor of the *Digest's* bicentennial, LSU Law School unveiled a Civil Law Online website featuring digitized copies of the *Digest* and the De La Vergne Volume. The Civil Law Online website provides, for the

# ELECTRONIC RESOURCES IN THE LAW LIBRARY PART II

*continued from page 1*

As of July 2008, LegalTrac indexes 1,484 legal periodical titles from 1980 to the present, including major U.S. law reviews, legal newspapers, specialty law publications, bar association journals, and international legal journals, including some titles from Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. Of those, 170 titles are accessible in full text. LegalTrac is an electronic version of Gale's Current Law Index, which is available in paper form in our library.

Each title chosen for inclusion in LegalTrac is selected according to criteria established by a special advisory committee of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), and the list of journals indexed runs from the AALL Spectrum to the Zoning and Planning Law Report. In addition to academic law reviews, which have articles on a wide range of topics, this index also contains many journals devoted to specific topics, including American Indian law, air and space law, animal rights law, appellate practice and procedure, banking and finance law, computer law, copyright law, environmental law, family law, human rights law, immigration law, labor and employment law, military law, and planning and zoning law. The database also contains law-related articles from over 1,000 additional business and general interest titles. To access LegalTrac in our library, click on the "InfoTrac" icon on any of our public access terminals, or from your office computer if you are a court employee, and select "LegalTrac" from the three resources listed there. (The other two are the Gale LegalForms, mentioned above, and a new acquisition, 19th Century U.S. Newspaper Digital Archive, an excellent historical news and genealogy source.)

The legal product accessible on *WilsonWeb* in our library is *Index to Legal Periodicals (ILP)*, which is accessed by clicking on the "WilsonWeb" icon on any of our public access terminals. Like *LegalTrac*, *ILP* provides expert indexing of a wide range of law reviews and other legal periodicals. The topic coverage is similar, but some of the subjects highlighted on the web site include administrative law, antitrust legislation, banking, constitutional law, domestic relations, environmental protection, estate planning, labor law, landlord/tenant decisions, malpractice suits, probate, products liability, tax law, and trade regulation. Like *LegalTrac*, *ILP* is based on a paper index, also called *Index to Legal Periodicals*, to which our library subscribes. The Wilson Company's Editorial Advisory Board, comprised of noted academic and law firm law librarians, advises the publisher on indexing and editorial policy, and new titles, including books as well as journals, are added based on the committee's assessment of their reference value. The list of journals indexed starts with the *ABA Journal* and ends with the *Zoning and Planning Law Report*. As of July 2008, *ILP* indexes 1,080 titles in the current module, or 912 titles excluding name changes, and 887 titles in the retrospective module, or 775 titles excluding name changes.

While there are many similarities between *LegalTrac* and *ILP*, there are also significant differences, such as the number of titles indexed, which is why our library and many others subscribe to both. Another difference is that while *LegalTrac's* coverage is from 1980 to the present, *ILP* online has two components, *Legal Periodicals & Books*, which indexes articles from 1982 to the present, and *Legal Periodicals Retro*, which covers from 1908 through 1981. That translates to one hundred years' worth of online coverage, a gold mine for

historical researchers, and also a great resource for those seeking the most recent information. This product provides the best of both worlds in terms of time.

Searching in *ILP* is also relatively easy. In addition to Basic, Advanced and Browse searching, there is also a Thesaurus feature, which allows you to determine what subject headings are used by the indexers. For example, if doing a search on drug courts, you can do an advanced search and find articles where the term "drug court" appears somewhere in the abstract. To find article citations that are subject indexed under the term, enter "drug courts" into the thesaurus, and the result is the subject heading "specialized courts," where a subdivision under "drug courts" yields 48 articles. For comparison, if you enter "drug court" as a search term in *LegalTrac's* Subject Guide, the results are 174 articles under that as a subject heading, with subdivisions under the term and related subjects offered. Since *LegalTrac* indexes a significantly higher number of titles, including legal newspapers such as the *New York Law Journal*, the *Los Angeles Daily Journal*, and the *National Law Journal*, that might explain why there are more results, especially since the concept of drug courts is relatively new.

While neither of these resources is difficult for the uninitiated searcher to use, we do have information specialists here in the law library who will be more than happy to show you the basics and make sure that your search strategy yields the best results. Whether you are trying to find everything written on a topic such as "surrogate mothers" or looking for articles on a particular court case or by a particular author, these two resources will be most useful. Because of the differences in scope and time coverage, it is often helpful to run a search

in both and compare your results. Once you have a list of citations, we can help you quickly determine whether the titles are in *HeinOnline*, from which they can be quickly printed, or whether they are in our paper collection and can be photocopied on the library's copy machines. Please see page 3 for a list of our prices and services.

Next time you have the opportunity, please drop by the library and let us demonstrate these and other electronic resources for you. A whole new world of research is waiting. δ

## THE LIBRARY'S E-RESOURCES

BNA Labor &  
Employment Law

Gale LegalForms

HeinOnline

JSTOR

LegalTrac

Lexis Congressional

Lexis Shepard's

LexisOne

Loislaw

NFPA Standards

Nineteenth Century U.S.  
Newspapers

PACER

Westlaw/WestPack

WilsonWeb's Index to  
Legal Periodicals

# “FATHER CHIEF JUSTICE”

“The show must go on!” was the word from Paul R. Baier, Secretary of the Supreme Court of Louisiana Historical Society and author and director of the play, *“Father Chief Justice”: Edward Douglass White and the Constitution*. The evening of May 22 was the first time the play about the life of Chief Justice Edward Douglass White and his judicial brothers on the United States Supreme Court was presented in the Louisiana Supreme Court courtroom. Despite a late afternoon deluge of rain, Historical Society members, friends, and distinguished members of the cast made their way to 400 Royal Street, entering the building under the gaze of sculptor Bryant Baker’s colossal statue of E. D. White, for refreshments in the Court’s museum and a debut of a photographic exhibit

by the Law Library of Louisiana on White’s life.

Inside the courtroom, Historical Society President David Bienvenu thanked Carol Billings, volunteer director of the Historical Society Museum, for arranging the evening’s events.

The play begins at the dedication of White’s statue in April 1926 on the Royal St. Court House steps and jumps around in time to different periods in White’s life, ending with a moving speech given by White at the Willard Hotel in Washington, D. C.

The cast included both judges and lawyers and E. D. White was played by three different people: Chief Justice Pascal F. Calogero, Jr. delivered White’s opinion from the case of *Bram v. U. S.*, 168 U. S. 532 (1897) with

characteristic fire and resolve. Chief Justice Calogero was escorted to the bench by Arielle Sims, daughter of Supreme Court employee Terence Sims and an eighth grade student at Ursuline Academy, to show that White was a kindly friend to many children he met on his daily walks from his home to the Supreme Court’s courtroom in the United States Capitol.

Retired Justice Harry T. Lemmon played White in scenes staged in Justice Holmes’s living room with Holmes’s wife Fanny, played by Judge Mary Ann Vial Lemmon, and Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., sporting a striking mustache, played by attorney Donald Hoffman of New Orleans. Harry Rosenberg of New Orleans appeared as Justice Louis D. Brandeis. In an appropriately southern white

linen suit, Harry S. Hardin, III, of New Orleans played White in scenes in the Whiteses’ living room at 1717 Rhode Island Avenue, with his wife Leita played by Judge Fredericka Wicker.

Professor Baier’s play has been sponsored for ten years by the Louisiana Bar Foundation, and he was the Foundation’s first Scholar in Residence. The play was written to rescue White, who was well known during his lifetime, from the obscurity of forgotten memory. A run of the play in Washington, D. C., in 2010, the Centennial of White becoming Chief Justice of the United States, is in the making.

The crowded audience also enjoyed performances by Garland R. Rolling of Metairie as Chief Justice William Howard Taft, Professor James R. West of Baton Rouge as the Bugler during Civil War scenes and Baier himself in his signature role as Professor Richard Henry Jesse. δ



The cast of “Father Chief Justice” (l to r): Professor James R. West, Garland R. Rolling, Harry Rosenberg, Judge Mary Ann Vial Lemmon, Donald Hoffman (sans mustache!), Professor Paul Baier, Judge Fredericka Wicker, Harry S. Hardin III, Retired Justice Harry T. Lemmon, Chief Justice Pascal F. Calogero, Jr.



left to right: Vicenc Feliu (standing), Ruth Mahoney, Charlene Cain and Tara Lombardi

## LIBRARY TOURS AND VISITORS: AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE AND LEARN

by Georgia Chadwick

The library staff enjoys sharing the library's many resources by giving tours to a wide variety of groups who visit the library, and each group gets a tour tailored to their interests. For younger visitors we often read *Marshall the Courthouse Mouse*, which keeps them entertained while learning about the work of the courts in our country. We make sure every group spends some time in our Rare Books Room to see the old Spanish and French materials and also the unique early Louisiana materials we own. One group we very much appreciate are the visitors who come to us a few times a year from the Graduate Law Program (LL.M.) and the Center of Civil Law Studies at the Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center. These graduate students often have something to share with

us from their home countries, which makes the tour a mutual learning experience. Language has not been a barrier since Mr. Agustin Parise, a graduate of the LL.M. program and a Research Associate at the CCLS, has occasionally served as interpreter. He is now able to lead some of the tours himself because he has become so familiar with our library. We were delighted when Mr. Parise identified a book in our rare books collection that is not owned by LSU, which he then borrowed for his doctoral dissertation research.

On June 20, we had a special program featuring two law librarians from LSU's Paul M. Hebert Law Center Library. We invited Vicenc Feliu, Associate Librarian for Foreign, Comparative and International Law, and Charlene Cain, Head of Access Services, to talk to the

library staff for one hour at lunch time. Vicenc Feliu was part of a panel presentation entitled "A Closer Look: Uncovering the Spanish Roots of Louisiana Civil Law," at the July 2007 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Law Libraries, held in New Orleans. He presented a condensed version of this panel for our staff. Vicenc discussed the resources Moreau-Lislet consulted to create the Digest of 1808, and he displayed beautiful digital images of documents believed to be written in Moreau-Lislet's own hand. The Law Library of Louisiana has fine copies of many of the materials mentioned in the presentation. The staff welcomed the opportunity to ask questions about the resources, and also appreciated having their historical import explained in detail. The library has purchased the CDs containing the original lectures,

and they are available for use in the library.

Charlene Cain shared with the staff the "Katrina" experience of LSU's law school and library. LSU welcomed students from New Orleans law schools and enabled them to continue their studies while their own schools were closed. With all the many people who crowded in to Baton Rouge while New Orleans was empty, everyday traffic became LSU football game day traffic. Every resource at LSU was pushed to the limit to accommodate the many anxious extra students, and the staff worked long hours. They offered creative solutions, such as registering students for courses the old fashioned way – by hand. They distributed truckloads of books made available by various publishers to replace those students had lost to flooding.

*continued on last page*

De Novo  
The Newsletter of the  
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## POLITICS DEBUNKED

by Tara Lombardi

As the presidential campaign progresses, some of you may be curious about political ads, and the two major candidates' claims against each other. There may be some confusion as to who is telling the truth, or if their facts are correct. Two political debunking Web sites stand out for their particularly trustworthy origins and their ease of use.

Politifact.com features an "Attack File" and a "Truth-O-Meter." The "Attack File" lists candidate's recent assaults against the other in speeches, interviews, and TV ads on such topics as "warrantless wiretapping" and "immigration." The "Truth-O-Meter" reveals the statement's range of truthfulness from false, barely true, mostly true to true. The link below the "Truth-O-Meter" takes the reader to a short article that explains the whole truth as compiled by the *St. Petersburg*

*Times* / Congressional Quarterly reporters and researchers.

FactCheck.org is a product of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Public Policy Center and is "a nonpartisan, nonprofit, consumer advocate for voters that aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics." Known for "seeing through the spin," FactCheck.org reveals, for example, Obama's incorrect assertion that McCain's campaign funds are mainly derived from lobbyists and PAC's, while straightening out McCain's "Tax Tally Trickery," which inflated Obama's tax increase voting record in the Senate.

Both sites are user friendly and worth a look during the coming months of political pandering, interviews and debates. If nothing else, the Web sites could help settle an office argument or two.

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Having the opportunity to attend LSU for the fall semester made it possible for many students to complete law degrees on time and to graduate in the spring, and the efforts of the LSU law school community were much appreciated.

The Law Library of Louisiana is looking forward to upcoming tours this fall from both with new and returning groups. Some new acquisitions we will have to show our visitors are five beautiful maps, one dating to the seventeenth century, which have been framed and will be displayed in our Rare Book Room. The library has received positive feedback about our tours. After taking a tour, visitors to the library leave more knowledgeable about our resources and the assistance we provide to the bar and the public.

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