From the President: Beginnings and Endings

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Beginnings and Endings

May is an odd month. It’s a month of both beginnings and endings. In some parts of the country May is the beginning of spring, with flowers and trees coming into bloom. For those of us in the South, May is the end of spring with many flowers already fading and the days growing steadily warmer. In academia, May is the end of spring with many of our students, the end of their academic career but the beginning of their professional careers. For our colleagues in the private sector, May is a beginning as they prepare for summer associates.

For AALL May is also a month of beginnings and endings. A fun factoid—did you know that AALL has three separate years? Our membership year begins in June, our Association year begins at the end of the Annual Meeting, and our fiscal year begins in October. So this month AALL staff will be updating membership rolls, sending out dues reminders, and welcoming new members. I find it very gratifying that, even in these difficult economic times, AALL’s membership renewal rate hovers around 95 percent. It’s great to know that our members still find value in our Association and make membership a priority in their budgets.

May is the beginning of the end for leadership roles for some AALL members. They will begin the process of wrapping up committee work, filing annual reports, and gearing up for a change in leadership. Emails will go out, and boxes will fly around the country as one year’s leaders prepare to turn over the reins to their successors. We write action plans and develop training materials to ensure that we accomplish the goals we set for ourselves.

May is a time of both reflection and anticipation. We reflect on what happened, what we have accomplished, and what still needs to be done. We celebrate what went right; we analyze what went wrong and how to correct our mistakes. We anticipate what comes next, be it a new class of summer associates, a new committee assignment, or a new leadership role.

One thing we are all, I hope, looking forward to with anticipation is the Annual Meeting. Since last August, members have been developing programs, suggesting speakers, and working to ensure that all members have a successful Meeting. I personally am looking forward to the changes that have been made in the Annual Meeting schedule—changes suggested by you, our members.

This year, in order to avoid some conflicts with SIS and chapter meetings, all AALL committees will meet on Saturday afternoon. The Diversity Symposium has been moved from Saturday to Sunday afternoon, in order to give it more prominence. The Opening Event has been moved to earlier on Saturday and will be moved to the Exhibit Hall. We are killing two birds with one stone here—giving members more time to browse the exhibits and more time for dinners with their colleagues. The final change is the elimination of the Closing Banquet. The Gallagher and Andrews Awards, which were given out in this venue, will now be awarded at the Business Meeting. The “official” closing of the Meeting and the handing over of the gavel to the new president, Darcy Kirk, will take place on Tuesday afternoon in the Exhibit Hall.

So no matter how you view May, as a beginning, an ending, or even as no more than the middle of your year, I look forward with anticipation to seeing you at the Annual Meeting in a few short weeks.

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