

## Wahab Public Law Library

2425 Nimmo Parkway  
Judicial Center, 10B  
Ground Floor  
Virginia Beach, VA  
23456

# Legal Briefs

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## No Cost Renovation Establishes New Conference/Study Area

The Law Library began offering a new series of lunch and learn programs early last year and we quickly discovered the need for a conference area in order to host these programs. We researched the cost of building a conference room and realized we could not afford the renovation, so the project was put on hold. During our all-staff training day, one of the presenters showcased their low cost library renovations utilizing the resources they already had on hand. This inspired Wahab staff to look at our plan again. The staff determined we could take apart some of our existing shelving and rearrange it to create a room for our program presenters and anyone else who needs some quiet space to study or confer with clients.

The result is an attractive, functional space at no cost!

Before



After



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## Introducing...



Michelle Chrzanowski joined the Law Library staff in August as our new Information Specialist II. Michelle previously worked at Princess Anne Area Library and has also assisted the Virtual Library staff with the library web page.

She earned her B.A. in Criminal Justice at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh with a minor in Psychology. While at The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, she took part in a study of Outagamie County's Victim Impact Panel and as a junior author contributed to the subsequent report.

After college, she became the lead dispatcher of the Milwaukee School of Engineering's Public Safety Department. She continued her career in the law enforcement community by becoming a dispatcher/clerk for the City of Franklin Police Department. She now resides in Virginia Beach with her husband who is an IT with the US Navy.

Melanie Smith joined the Law Library staff in October of this year as our new Office Assistant.

She has 18 years of experience in the mortgage industry. She is a licensed Title Insurance Agent and she owned and operated a title insurance agency for four years in Virginia Beach.

Melanie is a notary and will offer this service as her schedule allows. Her current schedule is Monday—Friday, 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.



Welcome Michelle and Melanie!

Receive This  
Newsletter  
Via E-mail!

If you are interested in receiving Legal Briefs via e-mail, please call the law library staff at (757) 385-4419 or send an email to: [llstaff@vbgov.com](mailto:llstaff@vbgov.com)

**“A lawyer  
without books  
would be like a  
workman  
without tools.”**

**Thomas  
Jefferson**

## What's New?

### On the Bookshelf

Like it or not, computers and the Internet are having a major impact on the practice of law, and anyone, attorney or self-represented litigant, who will be involved in the court system should stay informed on this timely topic. Wahab is here to help you! In addition to treatise materials on Internet law, we've received two Continuing Legal Education materials lately focused on issues of technology.

*Digital Tools for the Uber Litigator*  
Virginia CLE, 2008  
R 347.755072 D574 2008

Covers electronic case filing, data security, Virginia's proposed rules of discovery related to electronically stored information, federal electronic discovery, computer forensics and ethics issues.

*2008 Update on What Every Lawyer Needs to Know about E-Mail: Ethics Issues*  
Virginia CLE, 2008  
R 174.309755 S7332u 2008

Discusses the implications of several hypothetical

situations involving email use by attorneys, including what to do if you accidentally receive an email from an opposing attorney intended for their client, what types of electronic files and communications can and should be discarded, and outsourcing of discovery work.

### Around the Internet

*Open Congress*  
<http://www.opencongress.org/>

OpenCongress is a non-partisan website that makes it easy to track any bill, issue, or member of Congress. Official government data, news coverage, and blog posts are all brought together to give you the most information.

*Inter Alia*  
<http://www.inter-alia.net/>

Inter Alia is a legal research blog that pulls together information on legal blogs or "blawgs," books, and other resources to aid your research needs.

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## A Brief Look at Finding Briefs

Need a brief from a recent Supreme Court case? Not so long ago, you'd have to contact an official depository or make a trek to Washington, D.C., but now, many briefs are available online at either no charge or as part of an existing subscription to a service like Westlaw or Lexis. Here's a brief look at some sites that might be able to help you:

FindLaw – [http://supreme.findlaw.com/supreme\\_court/briefs/index.html](http://supreme.findlaw.com/supreme_court/briefs/index.html). Findlaw has briefs from the October 1999 term to the present, including petitioner, respondent, reply and amicus briefs. *Free!*

U.S. Supreme Court Wiki -[http://www.scotuswiki.com/index.php?title=Main\\_Page](http://www.scotuswiki.com/index.php?title=Main_Page). Covers 2007 and forward, cases are organized by date and include briefs, analysis and much more. *Free!*

LexisNexis – Lexis has some briefs available from 1979 forward in the Federal Briefs, Motions & Pleadings source.

Westlaw – Westlaw's coverage starts with the October Term 1990 and is located in the SCT-BRIEF file.

BriefServe – [www.briefserve.com](http://www.briefserve.com). Briefs are available in PDF format from the 1984 Term to the present at a cost of \$25.00 per brief.

Office of the Solicitor General – [www.usdoj.gov/briefs/search.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/briefs/search.html). The Solicitor General's office provides access to some briefs filed by that office from 1982 to present. *Free!*

If the brief you need isn't available from any of the above sites, there are document retrieval services which will photocopy briefs on file at the Library of Congress. A list of these services, as well as additional information for many of the sites listed above, is available online at [http://supremecourtus.gov/oral\\_arguments/briefsource.pdf](http://supremecourtus.gov/oral_arguments/briefsource.pdf).

## Tech Tips

### Featured Blog

**The Connected Lawyer** – <http://www.theconnectedlawyer.com/>

The Connected Lawyer is a blog that discusses technology and how it affects the legal world. It is written by Bryan Sims, a commercial litigation and civil appeals lawyer from the Chicago area. What makes this blog interesting is the variety of topics. Sims discusses everything from technology used in the courtroom, such as Google Maps, to web utilities designed to make your job easier.



### Featured Podcast

**TWiL ~ This Week in Law** – <http://twit.tv/twil>



This Week in Law is a monthly podcast that discusses breaking issues in technology law including patents, copyrights, and much more. The host is Denise Howell, an appellate, intellectual property, and technology lawyer in Newport Beach, CA. She also is the author of Bag and Baggage (<http://bgbg.blogspot.com/>) which was one of the first law-related weblogs (also coined the term “blawg” as shorthand for legal weblog), Lawgarithms (<http://blogs.zdnet.com/Howell/>), and a contributor to Between Lawyers (<http://betweenlawyers.corante.com/>). Denise is joined by Cathy Kirkman, Ernie Svenson, John Palfrey, and other guests.

### Featured Tool

**Google’s Gmail Mail Goggles** – <http://mail.google.com/>

Have you ever sent a message late at night or on the weekend that you regretted later? Gmail now has a great feature called Mail Goggles that will try to alleviate this problem. How it works is when you are about to send your message, a window will open up and you will have to solve five math problems in an allotted time. If you are unable to solve them, your message will not be sent. It is defaulted to work from 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. However, you can modify the settings to change the day, time, and difficulty of the problems. To activate Mail Goggles, go into your Gmail settings and turn it on in the “Labs” tab. You can then adjust the setting in the “General” tab.

## Pro Se Corner

If you work during the day or have small children, it can be very hard to make it down to the Law Library. Fortunately, other Virginia Beach Public Library locations have some materials for legal research. Most libraries have the state and city codes and a collection of self-help legal books. Central Library offers much more, including the U.S. Code and *Virginia Forms*, one of our most requested resources. Ask at the Information Desk for assistance - the librarians and staff will be happy to direct you to their legal collections.



Another option - there are a number of good Web sites targeted to self-represented litigants. Check out [www.VBgov.com/dept/library/law](http://www.VBgov.com/dept/library/law), then select ‘Self Help’ to learn more.

## Upcoming Event

Law Day  
May 1, 2009

A Legacy of Liberty

Celebrating Lincoln’s  
Bicentennial



This year the American Bar Association will be celebrating the Bicentennial of Lincoln’s birth. We at the Wahab Law Library will be planning some engaging events for this day. Further details coming soon!

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Hours of Operation  
Monday - Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**Holiday Closings:**

**Nov 11  
Veterans Day**

**Nov 27-28  
Thanksgiving Day &  
Day After**

**Dec 24  
Christmas Eve  
Close at Noon**

**Dec 25  
Christmas Day**

**Jan 1  
New Year's Day**

**Jan 19  
Martin Luther King Day**

**Feb 16  
Presidents' Day**

Visit our web site at:  
[www.vbgov.com/dept/  
library/law](http://www.vbgov.com/dept/library/law)

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**Mission Statement**

**The mission** of the Wahab Public Law Library is to ensure:

Free access to current legal and law related information for research and the practice of law, and

Well-trained professional staff to provide quality customer service to the general public, government agency employees, the judiciary, and members of the legal profession.

