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Library Profile: Beth Klein

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Library Profile: Beth Klein



Beth Klein, Library Specialist for Research Services and Administrative Assistant to the Research Law Librarians, provides competent and friendly public service, helping patrons access information in an effective and efficient manner. She enjoys the human exchange in sharing, disseminating, and retrieving information. To serve, to please, and to make life easier for others are all high values for Beth, but public service is only one aspect of her responsibilities, which draw on her diverse skills. These skills include research acumen, expertise in creative writing as well as other creative, technical, clerical, and supervisory skills. Beth enjoys using all these talents and abilities in serving the Notre Dame Law school community.

Beth earned her Bachelors in Speech, Radio, and TV, and her Masters in Speech and Public Relations at the University of North Dakota. However, her educational journey was not without some novel twists and turns. She grew up in Arvada, Colorado (a suburb of Denver) and attended the K-12 school system, now famous for the Columbine school shooting. Starting out with aspirations of being a professional Girl Scout, Beth began her collegiate work at Rockhurst, a Jesuit College in Kansas City, Missouri and enrolled in the Program of American Humanics – an academic program for non-profit organizations and directorship training. While there, Beth met her husband, Jeff, who later earned his JD at the University of North Dakota Law School. They married in January, 1981, in Kansas City and moved to Bismarck, North Dakota. It was there that Beth resumed her studies at the University of Mary and

enrolled in the London “May term” at the Catholic Radio and Television Centre in London where she enjoyed being a cameraman (woman) and technical director. Over the years, Beth has taught Speech, or worked in the Office of Public Relations at State Universities in Mayville and Dickinson, North Dakota and in Charleston, Illinois and then at Ivy Tech in South Bend, Indiana. She has also written personal interest stories for newspapers in Finley, Mayville, and Bowman, and was the fundraising director for the Sunrise Foundation in Bowman and the Fargo Catholic Schools.

In 1996, Beth, her husband Jeff, and their four children: Kristen, Jennifer, Caitlin, and Aaron, moved to South Bend after Jeff accepted a position as vice-president and trust officer with the Valley American Bank. In September, 1996, Beth was hired by the Kresge Law Library for copy cataloguing under Barbara Ritty. Just over a year later, in January of 1998, Beth joined the library’s Research Services/Reference Department, where she has remained ever since.

Beth’s responsibilities while in this department have included the creation of exhibit display cases featuring faculty publications as well as displays on various topics such as the Legal Aid Clinic and drawings of the new Law school building, now in existence. She recalls putting together the writings and case decisions of a visiting dignitary -- “Judge Antonio Augusto Cancado Trindade, Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and the Clynes Visiting Chair in Judicial Ethics.” Most display case requests came from Patricia O’Hara, the former Notre Dame Law School Dean, and the task was given to Beth by Dwight King, Head of Research Services.

Usually Beth’s large work projects occur two or three times a year, most of them involving faculty committee support. As project designer and organizer, Beth engages in and supervises student workers in the research process helping the students maneuver through LexisNexis and Westlaw databases and other non-law resources. Once the information is gathered, Beth compiles the results into graphs and spreadsheets, devising ways for the content to be useful to the faculty member in a visually appealing format. Recently, Beth has helped organize faculty bibliographies for the ABA

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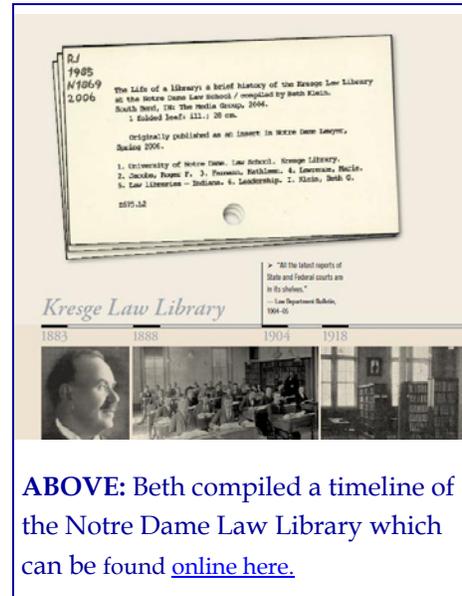
accreditation visits, and also helped Dwight King with his writing and research activity focusing on minority law librarians. However, Beth reports that gathering information for the law library timeline in the 2006 Spring issue of the *Notre Dame Lawyer* magazine (see insert at right) was the most challenging project to date. This project required extensive research and the reading of Law School Deans' Reports, Law Library Annual Reports, and searching for articles on the history of the Notre Dame Law school and law library in the *University Bulletin* and other resources, in addition to annotating selected photos from the University Archives with editorial assistance from Dwight King and Patti Ogden.

As one can readily see, Beth is a woman of many talents that are played out in the work setting but there are many more talents employed in her personal, social, and civic life. She especially enjoys working with her hands; most often, gardening and home improvement projects. She is musically accomplished and would play her piano, guitar, or

violin "if [she] had more time."

As an active volunteer, Beth is involved with St. Vincent De Paul delivering food to clients' homes and verifying requests for clothing and furniture. She and Jeff enjoy being involved in the school activities of Caitlin and Aaron. Each fall they volunteer as chaperones for the Penn High School marching band competitions. In her quiet moments, Beth loves to read science fiction, fantasy, and adventure stories. Among her favorites are young adult books: the Harry Potter series, the Bartimaeus Trilogy, the Inheritance cycle, and the Artemis Fowl series. Her favorite authors include Clive Cussler, Tom Clancy, and David Baldacci.

What are Beth's personal aspirations at the law library? "To do the best job I can do with the tasks that I am given. I work for a great bunch of people. They are very flexible and understanding in enabling me to meet my family's scheduling needs. I receive positive reinforcement and that taps into my creativity. I am most grateful for working here at



ABOVE: Beth compiled a timeline of the Notre Dame Law Library which can be found [online here](#).

ND especially with the educational benefits for our children—"It's all about family." Today, Beth has had one child graduate from Notre Dame, another who is currently in college, and another who will begin college next fall.

-Susan Hamilton



AT LEFT: One of many display cases Beth has designed over the years. This one, detailing the expansion project, stood in the halls of the old law school building prior to the renovation.