I would like to thank SWALL for making it possible for me to attend my first AALL annual meeting. My main goals for the conference were to promote the Texas State Law Library’s (TSLL) remote access to electronic databases program, talk to vendors about additional remote resources, and discuss with other librarians ways to improve the service as well as new services to offer. To help with the promotional goal, I created a poster about our remote access program to display at the meeting’s poster session.

I was anxious to hang up my poster, so as soon as I arrived in San Antonio I checked in at the convention center. I had some free time after I successfully wrestled the giant 4’ x 8’ poster onto its board, so I rented a bike from B-cycle and rode down the San Antonio River to visit the four historic missions: Mission Concepción, Mission San Jose, Mission San Juan, and Mission Espada. I was amazed at these historic buildings, the beautiful river, and the variety of water birds and turtles I saw.

That evening the exhibit hall opening reception kicked off a conference that was busier than I could imagine: filled with great ideas, delicious food, engaging people, and fascinating workshops. On Sunday, I attended Hot Topics in Law Library Technology, in which different groups discussed various technologies. My group discussed free legal information online, which gave me the opportunity to promote the TSLL’s remote access program and learn about other online resources to investigate. I also attended Libguide Guidance: Innovative Uses for Libguides, where I was excited to see the TSLL’s guides mentioned. There were several new uses for Libguides discussed that I am hoping to implement in my library, such as creating guides to instruct in the use of databases and embedding videos in guides.

On Monday, I attended Click and Go: Ensuring Smooth Access to Online Resources, where I learned about tools for checking catalog links. In the last month, we have started using one of the programs they recommended, Xenu, to search our public website for broken links. I also enjoyed the Cool Tools Café, which offered a wide range of great tools. I particularly enjoyed learning more about Libguides 2.0 and Legal Research Apps. Information and handouts for all the tools are available online: <http://cssis.org/education/annual-meeting/2014/d4-cool-tools-caf%C3%A9>.

I also attended vendor presentations on What’s New in HeinOnline and Thomson Reuters Print & ProView eBooks. I am excited for some of HeinOnline’s new features, such as ABA periodicals and the FastCase integration. I had previously attended a LexisNexis presentation about their e-books, so it was interesting to see what Thomson Reuters is developing.

Of course, AALL wasn’t all workshops, there were receptions as well! The SWALL/HALL/DALL/UNT reception was on the beautiful patio overlooking the River Walk. It was great to chat with and meet people I had previously only interacted with over email. I also enjoyed the wonderful Tarlton/UT iSchool reception hosted by Barbara Bintliff and the SCCLL-SIS reception at the historical La Villita Historic Arts Village, where I had a very interesting conversation with a law librarian from the U.S. Supreme Court Law Library. Learning about other libraries was definitely one my favorite aspects of the whole experience. Finally, there was the Thomson Reuters Member Appreciation Event and, having never attended AALL, I did not know what to expect, but they threw quite a party complete with dancing, fireworks, BBQ, and a rodeo!

On Tuesday, I attended Access to Justice: Crossing Borders Together. I loved the ideas for collaboration with public libraries, legal aid clinics, and bar associations. I also attended Just in Time: Models of Demand-Driven Acquisitions for E-Books, which gave me some things to think about as the TSLL considers adding e-books. Then there was a great talk by Davita Vance-Cooks, U.S. Public Printer, at the Association Luncheon. And finally there was the poster session, where I spoke with vendors, public law librarians, and academic law librarians about the remote access program at the TSLL. Several of the public librarians were very interested in the project and hoped to start similar programs in their states, which was exciting to hear!

I came back to work on Wednesday exhausted but energized and ready to start new and exciting projects. Thank you, SWALL, for making this experience possible!