

State, Court & County Law Libraries **NEWS**



Volume 30, Number 2

Spring 2004

Chair's Message **Boston or Bust? Or Both!**

From Charles R. Dyer, Chair, SCCLL SIS

You gotta laugh at the irony. Come to Boston, and we'll laugh together.

Today, as I write this column, I will be attending the San Diego County Bar Association's Law Week Luncheon, at which the San Diego County Public Law Library is receiving the Distinguished Organization Award as part of the bar association's annual awards. The award is given for service to the bar and to the legal community as a whole. We are greatly honored and appreciate having the warm support of the local bar. It helps get us through the day.

While the ceremony is going on, there is a teleconference of the California Task Force on County Law Libraries. One topic of the task force is to respond with input to the proposal from the California Judicial Council's Working Group on Court Fees to create a uniform filing fee across the state and to maintain a moratorium on raising the fee for three years. The Working Group plans to do this as part of the courts' budget process with the Legislature, so there will be no opportunity for open legislative debate, and it may happen very quickly. Locking the fees for three years and changing their

(Continued on page 2)

The fact that I had to communicate by email did cause me to remove the expletives.

Inside this issue:

Managing by the book	P. 6
Awards	P. 9
Charley's Corner	P. 10
Start of Boston Conference section	P. 13
Conference tips	P. 15
Conference programs of note	P. 16
SCCLL reception	P. 19

method of distribution would have a devastating effect on California's county law libraries if there is no provision for a significantly increased fee for the libraries included in the proposal. Did the Working Group think of that? No. In fact, they were not going to consult the law libraries at all. Fortunately, the lobbyist for the Council of California County Law Librarians got wind of it and got them to agree to at least check with the law libraries. So, even in a state that has been as supportive of county law libraries as California, danger lurks in the budget process as other entities act without thinking. Since I cannot attend the teleconference, I emailed my remarks to others ahead of time. The fact that I had to communicate by email did cause me to remove the expletives.

Then at 4 p.m. today, I am holding a general staff meeting with all my staff in order to announce the budget cuts we are taking this next year. We got a small fee increase this last year, and are budgeting on the belief that we will get another incremental increase this year. Yet paid filings are down severely because the State raised the other parts of the fee so much. In order to avoid layoffs and closing branches, we are freezing wages, doing a one-week unpaid furlough, freezing the library contribution to medical benefits, cutting 10 percent of the book budget, and removing all the little nice things, like funds for travel and memberships. Frankly, given the state of things, we may well have not cut deep enough anyway.

Then at 6 p.m., our grandson who is

living with us this year will be having his 13th birthday, and at his request, we are having a costume party and our band is playing for it. (I consider it a huge compliment that a 13-year-old wants a blues and jazz band at his party. Of course, the price is right.)

In the midst of all this, I am past my deadline to write a column that is supposed to be inspiring to SIS members. My inspiration is this. Those who know us, those who come into our libraries, they really appreciate us. Law libraries that serve the public or serve public agencies or serve the local bar have many friends. Our personal touch is exactly what sets us apart. We are not replaceable by the Internet. We all know that. So do our users.

I fear for our colleagues in Florida, and Colorado, and Pennsylvania, and public agencies across the country, for those good law librarians who have lost their jobs through the stupidity of budget analysts and politicians who haven't been to their local law libraries and don't care. I understand the turmoil in their lives as they seek other places to do good public service or give up and just look for regular work. But I also fear and perhaps more so for the customers they served so well, the ones who became their friends as they gave their personal service to them. Those customers are people who won't get the service they need, who will have less justice in their lives as a result, and our society will diminish as a result.

Soon we'll gather in Boston and share our concerns and our conviviality. Life-long friendships are made through AALL and the SCCLL SIS. There will

(Continued on page 3)

be fewer of us, due either to closed libraries or diminished travel budgets. We'll have to drink a toast to our lost colleagues, but more importantly to those lost institutions, places where real people help real people, where humanity is at its best.

Our libraries were built in small increments, little steps over time that advanced things when we were able to make reasoned arguments and achieved that little bit more funding. Someday, prosperity will return to governmental entities. Someday, we'll go through the laborious process of making us collective case once again for the growth of our fine institutions.

For, even as many of us look at tough times, some of our colleagues and their institutions have actually been doing better. A couple of weeks ago, I visited the Travis County Law Library in Austin, Texas. Lisa Rush, the library director there, reports to the court and the county government. Often in tight times, departmental libraries fare worse than those that are independent. They are in tight quarters. They are inundated with self-help litigants. But the staff is cheery and does good service. And the judiciary there has confidence in Lisa and her crew. The court created two positions called reference attorneys, who help family law litigants fill out their forms. This is the equivalent to the family law facilitators found in other states. But these attorneys report to Lisa, who does not herself have a J.D. Why? Because the court recognizes her ability to manage both the budget and the logistics of the

people who won't get the service they need, who will have less justice in their lives as a result and our society will diminish as a result.

situation. The referrals between these attorneys and regular library services are, as you can imagine, done with ease, and the clientele is served very well. So, the court is now looking to expand the library's space. Lisa feels at times that she is struggling, but we outside observers also know that she is winning, and so is Travis County.

The San Diego County Public Law Library has a small foundation, a group of attorneys that does charitable fund raising for the library. Yesterday, that board met, and I gave them a syn-

opsis of our financial woes. Their response? The board decided to redouble its efforts and wants to start new fund raising programs. Will they make up the difference? Maybe not in terms of the money. But in terms of the support and the concern expressed by our friends, they make a whale of a difference.

So, if you're down because of these financial woes, call a friend. Or dress up in a costume and celebrate someone's birthday.

Hope to see you in Boston. If you have to pay your own way, let me know. I'll buy you a drink.

SCCLL Executive Board

Chair

Charles Dyer
(619) 531-390
cdyer@sdcll.org

Vice Chair/Chair Elect

Sandy Marz
(775) 328-3250
smarz@mail.co.washoe.nv.us

Past Chair

Mike Miller
(410) 260-1430
mike.miller@courts.state.md.us

Secretary/Treasurer

Cynthia Fellows
(907) 264-0583
cfellows@courts.state.ak.us

Board Member (2001-2004)

Catherine Lemann
(504) 568-5701
clemann@lasc.org

Board Member (2002-2005)

Sara Galligan
(651) 438-8080
sara.gallian@co.dokata.mn.us

Board Member (2003-2006)

Anne Morrison
(301) 952-3045
admorrison@co.pg.md.us

SCCLL Committees for 2003-2004

Awards

Lisa Rush, Chair
Jean Holcomb
Donna Bausch
Susan Levinkind

Bylaws

Jerry Stephens, Chair
Maryruth Storer
Sharon Borbon
Barry Herbert

Education

Marcus Hochstetler, Chair
Coral Henning
Chris Tighe
Connie Von Der Heide
Scott Burgh

Grants

Jane Colwin, Chair
Carol Suhre
Rita Dermody
Karen Lutke

Membership and Mentoring

Cosette Sun, Chair
Judy Meadows
Karla Gedell
Jeff Meyerowitz
Anne Grande

Cornell Winston
Charles Dyer
Dan Cordova
Anne Matthewman

Newsletter

Barbara Fritschel, Chair
Charles Dyer
Pat Parker
Jean Holcomb
Fran Jones

Nominations

Anita Anderson, Chair
Shirley David
Regina Smith

Publicity/Public Relations

Karen Westwood, Chair
Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson
Fran Jones
Gail Warren
Anne McDonald
Pat Parker
Scott Lindsey-Stevens
Ana Hinman

Standards

David Voisinet, Chair
Pat Parker
Fran Jones

Strategic Planning

Mike Miller, Chair
Charles Dyer
Sandy Marz
Cynthia Fellows
Catherine Lemann
Sara Galligan
Anne Morrison

Sourcebook

Pat Parker, Chair
Kristin Ford
William Ketchum
Carol Collins
Rebekah Maxwell

Trustee Development

Shirley David, Chair
Charles Dyer

Website/Listserv

Joelle Gresham, Chair
Karla Gedell
Scott Lindsey-Stevens
Judy Gaskell

Marketing Special Committee

Marnie Warner
Maureen Wells
co-chairs

Silent Auction

Judy Meadows, Chair
Lu Nguyen

The Model County Law Library Working Group has no members.

FROM THE EDITOR:

Barbara L. Fritschel, Editor
5th Circuit Satellite Librarian,
Beaumont, TX

My apologies Yogi, but it does feel like déjà vu all over again. I am now in my second “official” budget crisis—they seem to come every 5 or 6 years. When Charley talks about some of the cuts his library system is having to make, it sounds very similar to what I’ve heard from other libraries and library systems around the country. The optimist in me says we’ve gotten through this before, we can get through this again; the pessimist in me says how many more times can we go through this before services get so cut back that we have reached a point of no return.

I’m glad that there is some good news in this newsletter—that there are libraries out there who are able to provide outstanding services even under difficult circumstances. Jean’s book review reminds us that we can take care of ourselves and our employees even when money is tight. And as Judith Siess notes, one of the values of a conference is the networking which goes on. We are not facing these problems by ourselves and we can adapt what has been successful for others to our own situation.

It has been said many times that librarians are a col-

SCCLL List

To subscribe, follow the instructions at:
[http://www.aallnet.org/sis/sccll/membership/
listserv.htm](http://www.aallnet.org/sis/sccll/membership/listserv.htm)

To send a message to everyone on the list, send e-mail
to:
sccll-sis@aallnet.org

laborative group and I am amazed by the ways we try to help our colleagues, through exchanging ideas and bidding on silent auction items to help fund travel grants for those who would find it difficult to otherwise attend a AALL conference.

If we lived in a perfect world, we would all be able to attend AALL and other conferences every year. Since we do not, I hope this newsletter will be able to share information and ideas. Please let me know if there is anything you would like to see in it. I’ve been blessed as an editor by having outstanding people willing to make outstanding contributions. I hope this continues longer than the budget crisis! In the meantime, I just may take Charley up on his offer of a free drink!

SCCLL News

Is published three times a year (fall, winter, and spring/summer) by the State, Court and County Law Libraries SIS

The deadline for the next issue is September 15, 2004

Articles and forms should be submitted via electronic mail to:

Barbara L. Fritschel, SCCLL News Editor
5th Circuit Satellite Librarian, Beaumont, TX
Email: 5SatLib-Beaumont@ca5.uscourts.gov

The State Court & County Law Libraries SIS does not assume any responsibility for the statements advanced by the contributors in this newsletter. The opinions expressed in SCCLL News are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SCCLL SIS.

Managing “by the book”

In tight economic times, libraries like ours face many challenges. With static or declining revenues, escalating costs, and growing demands for services, managers and employees of publicly funded law libraries address tough choices when allocating resources. Balancing demands for a share of the budget pie between collection, technology, and human service costs often appears to be an impossible task.

How can we reward employees in today’s revenue challenged climate? How can we continue to do more with less without paying a huge hidden cost in employee burnout and attrition?

As employees of a publicly funded county law library, my co-workers and I are not immune from these pressures. During the budget planning process, we often feel very disheartened by the challenge of finding the right mix of resources to keep the library moving forward to reach our strategic goals. Although it may seem there’s little we can do, particularly about staff compensation, money may not be the only option available when considering rewarding employees.

While there’s no one easy answer to questions about how to reward library staff, Bob Nelson in [1001 Ways to Reward Employees](#) provides a broad spectrum of suggestions about ways that entities and managers can reward employees. In his book published in paperback by Work-

man Publishing of New York in 1994 for \$9.85, Nelson focuses on no-cost or very low cost strategies.

Nelson points out that money is only one of the factors that contribute to employee job satisfaction. Library managers must be honest and open with those they supervise about the library’s ability to keep pace with community and industry standards from point of hire onward. Most public employees accept their positions with a basic understanding of the scope of their institution’s salary range flexibility and future pay growth potential.

So if higher pay won’t be a reward factor that will be a likely option at your library, Nelson provides an amazing array of alternatives. By taking this path, he parallels general management theory. He identifies a list of the ten best ways to reward employees for their good work:

1. money
2. recognition
3. time off
4. a piece of the action
5. favorite work
6. advancement
7. freedom
8. personal growth
9. fun
10. prizes

Other than money, most of us can effectively utilize the other options on this list. In fact, because much of what Nelson describes is so commonsensical, we may already be using some of these techniques without thinking of them as rewards.

(Continued on page 7)

Thinking of this list of options in a new light might just be the first step in the development of a library wide reward program. Nelson makes a point to remind managers that informal rewards can be powerful motivators. To be effective, an informal reward must be personalized.

Identifying what method of recognition means the most to each employee might appear to be a daunting task. Often, the most straightforward approach works best. Consider asking those you supervise to create a list of no-cost rewards they'd like to receive. Don't be surprised to find requests for time off, flex time, and other ways to vary work on the list employees create. The lesson here is that many employees don't even think to ask for the types of rewards well within their manager's power to grant.

Other than money, most of us can effectively utilize the other options on this list

Tailoring rewards to match individual preferences, matching rewards to achievement, timing recognition at the point the activity occurs, and balancing public and private recognition ensure the effectiveness of your reward program. Don't be daunted by the need to be aware of all of these factors all the time. Nelson reminds managers that timely, personalized and specific acknowledgements means the most. An email expressing appreciation for a job well done or for a good suggestion to a problem fits that criteria.

Giving extra thought in advance to stressful times and

building rewards into major projects during the design phase helps trigger reward moments. Consider things like food, flowers, personalized notes, candy, two hour lunch breaks, doing someone's least favorite task for them, attendance at a training program or seminar for their value as rewards and motivators. Celebrations to mark events or milestones provide a way to recognize group achievement.

Don't undervalue communication. Employees place a high value on getting information not only about their own job performance but about how the library as a "business" is doing. The sense of inclusion in the culture of the organization provides satisfaction for all levels of staff. When employees know what's going on in the operation, the door opens for suggestions about better ways to do things. Emotional investment in the success of the library goes hand in hand with job satisfaction.

Leadership for employee rewards can move both up and down the chain of command.

While a library's governing body may provide praise to the library director, that level of satisfaction won't reach all of the staff unless the director makes a point to convey the message. The governing board won't know about the amazing individual achievements of the staff unless the library director profiles the work of individual staff. By crediting

(Continued on page 8)

individual staff work, governing boards develop a more complete picture of the complexity of a library's operation. Often satisfied governing body members are amenable to a little coaching. Many would be happy to send an email message to the staff or communicate directly with individual employees when presented with a suggestion about this type of recognition.

The strategies described by Nelson will work for libraries with a large staff as well as for environments where the librarian is the only employee. Although Nelson writes for enterprises with more than one employee, his common sense approach to figuring out what's meaningful for employees on a one by one basis translates well to the one employee county law library environment.

If you're a solo librarian, the challenge may just be thinking more directly about the importance of providing rewards for yourself. Setting project milestones with built in rewards could mean giving yourself the freedom to reorder priorities one day, putting tasks from your "not my favorites" list off for another day. Looking outside your library for your rewards might be another answer. Here's where AALL, chapter and local library associations provide peer interaction and opportunities to find recognition and acknowledgement situations.

Nelson reminds all of us about keeping our planning for rewards in perspective. To him, the important thing for us all to do is to try some of his suggestions. There is no right or wrong way to go about designing a library reward program. If

you try, others will respond. Ultimately, what makes each of us come to work is a sense of pride and achievement linked at heart to a feeling that what we offer will be respected and valued.

Jean Holcomb
King County Law Library
Seattle, WA



SCCLL COMMITTEES 04-05

I would like to start putting together committees for next year. Please email me if you would like to serve. Please consider volunteering even if you can't make it to the annual meeting. There is a lot of committee work that can be done by email. Please contact me at:

smarz@mail.co.washoe.nv.us

I'll be excited to hear from you.
Sandy Marz



CONGRATULATIONS!

SHIRLEY DAVID
DIRECTOR, SACRAMENTO COUNTY PUBLIC
LAW LIBRARY

Shirley was chosen as one of the winners of this year's Marian Gould Gallagher Award. It is richly deserved. Thank you for all of your years of outstanding service.



Call for Nominations for the Werner Award

Do you know a state, court or county law librarian who has performed a significant service to persons with disabilities?

If so, please nominate him or her for the SCCLL *O. James Werner Award for Distinctive Service to Persons with Disabilities*.

The nominee must:

1. Be a member of the State, Court, and County Law Library Special Interest Section; *and*
2. Have made a significant contribution to person with disabilities by either serving directly or to arranging for services to be provided to people with disabilities.

The nominee can also be a SCCLL member who has a disability and provides distinctive service.

Please nominate a SCCLL member by emailing Lisa Rush at Lisa.Rush@co.travis.tx.us. Please provide contact information for yourself and your nominee and describe the service your nominee performed.

You can also reach Lisa by calling the Travis County Law Library at 512-854-9290.

The deadline for nominations is June 6, 2004. Thank you.

Charley's Corner: Some disparate ramblings

by Charles R. Dyer, Director of Libraries, San Diego County Public Law Library

Nothing in this column represents the view of my Library or its Board of Trustees. These are just my personal opinions.

As I am wont to do whenever I have a long plane flight, I raided the magazine rack at the airport for some interesting reading before a flight to Minneapolis in late March. I picked up a copy of the April 2004 *Discover* magazine. One article was titled, "Whose Life Would You Save?" but the more pertinent descriptor was the line referring to the article on the cover: "Are Right and Wrong Wired Into Our Brains?" The article went on to describe the research of Joshua Greene, a "philosopher turned scientist" at Princeton University, who studies brain waves of subjects faced with ethical dilemmas.

It seems that those dilemmas that cause some consternation when making the choice affect different areas of the brain than those that can be reasoned more abstractly. Greene maintains that certain choices are hard wired into our brain through evolution. For instance, is it appropriate to smother your newborn child in order to avoid revealing the hiding place being used by you and other villagers to the enemy soldiers. The great need to protect one's own child, even at one's own loss of life, is, he believes is an evolutionary development that results in a much more emotive response to this question than the standard utilitarian one.

I found the article fascinating, not just because it reinforced what we all already seem to know about our-

selves, that we'd die for our kids, but because it reinforced my own notion that our own individual sense of justice and moral outrage is more hard wired than philosophers and legal jurisprudence scholars are likely to admit. To the law and economics oriented judge, the person who spends unimaginable funds and inordinate time pursuing some perceived wrong, well past the actual value, must seem extraordinarily silly. Yet we all have seen such people. Not just the obsessive schizophrenics, but otherwise mentally healthy people, do this.

I am saving the article to add to my store of materials that have implications for legal informatics. As I discussed in my previous column (January 2004), *informatics* is the "study of the structure, behavior, and interactions of both natural and engineered computational systems." Those who study legal informatics are looking in part toward developing artificial intelligence systems that would facilitate computer-run distribution of court services. Some would even like an artificial replacement to jury verdicts. But so far, we have had trouble even developing adequate software programs to help folks fill in family law forms. They work for some, but not for all. Perhaps, in addition to the myriad of language and cultural barriers, we also have genetic barriers. There is a lot of work to do before we can replace court clerks and librarians.

(Continued on page 11)

I have always tried to use Charley's Corner to look at things in a broader context. With budgeting and legislative battles on my mind, it has been hard of late to write this column. Almost makes me want to get back out on the reference desk so I can hear other people's problems for awhile. But my staff is so efficient that they handle all the problems with the public, and leave me the mess of trying to keep funding going.

In fact, they have gotten so good that I now routinely receive the problem patron reports well after the situations have been resolved. A guy is making a disturbance in the reading room, and the staff is handling it with such aplomb that the police have come and gone before I even know there is an issue. Another guy leaves terrorist notes, and the staff has already got the FBI in and out before I hear of it. Literally, I have found out about some of these events only because a senior manager has left word with his staff to go ahead and break into a meeting with me to confirm their actions if a situation escalates beyond a certain point. I have asked about this, and the reply is that we get so much practice that staff are used to these situations. We've had to create a new procedure so as to define for staff just when to call 911 and when to call the regular police dispatch number.

I'm thinking of having staff start tallying these incidents like they do reference questions, so we can report statistics on them. It would be interesting to know if the adage about the full moon is statistically true. It would be interesting to see if we have seasonal variations. Maybe I should break

them down by the level of incident, i.e., handled by staff, needed regular police dispatch, needed 911.

I remember for years it was the contention of the leaders of AALL that all the types of law libraries had more in common that they had that set them apart. I think while we all owned the National Reporter system and filed in Matthew Bender binders, that may well have been true. Now, with so much turned over to online access, and the use of different online systems by our colleagues in other types of law libraries, and the rise of self-represented litigants, times have changed. Look at the growth in private law librarians of the Law Section of SLA. Look at the rise of CALI and the rise of academic law librarian attendance at AALS meetings. Look at the numbers of public law librarians who connect with local public library consortia and attend state library association meetings and legislative days. I think we are much more separated than before.

I was an academic law librarian until 1987. My very good friend, Carmen Brigandi, used to be a technical services librarian for the New York Supreme Court Library in Syracuse for many years, but she has been the acquisitions librarian at California Western School of Law for the last six. We get together very regularly, and have confided in each others for a long, long time. But now we are having difficulty understanding each other's issues at work. Our institutions have had so many changes, such different pressures, such different missions.

Roy Mersky, my mentor from the University of Texas so many years ago, recently sent out a plea to his group of Texas Law Library alums, asking for help in devising a public relations plan. He has, of course, been an expert in public relations and marketing to his faculty. But now, due to budget pressures, he wants to reach out to the bar, the public and the legislature. I think what was most shocking to me is that this extremely knowledgeable sage in our profession had not known of the collective and individual efforts of both the private law librarians and the public law librarians to do marketing and public relations these past two decades. I didn't know where to begin to respond. I was so overwhelmed with the notion of trying to start someone from the beginning that I completely froze up. So now I am contributing to the problem of the increasing separation.

It's no wonder that 80 percent of our profession does not understand the need for increased legislative lobbying on funding issues. They understand the issues of intellectual freedom, copyright, and privacy well enough, but state budgeting is new to them. It's our job to get our colleagues in other types of libraries to understand that access is as fundamentally important as intellectual freedom, copyright, and privacy.

Let me hear from you if you want to respond to these ramblings. cdyer@sdcpill.org Please do not put expletives in the subject line, as I get a lot of junk mail. I would hate to delete your pithy comments by accident.

Nevada Supreme Court Amends Court Rules for Assisting Self-Represented Litigants and Adopts Statewide Standardized Divorce Forms

On April 1, 2004, the Nevada Supreme Court issued orders concerning Nevada Supreme Court Rule 44, which deals with self-representation, and standardized joint petition divorce forms.

The Nevada Supreme Court stipulated that the Nevada Supreme Court Law Library Commission will develop a training program to educate law librarians and court personnel on the difference between legal information and legal advice when assisting patrons in completing standardized forms. In addition, the order for the standardized forms for a joint petition for divorce states that the forms when used shall be accepted in the Nevada State courts.

This recent action by the Nevada Supreme Court is anticipated to give law librarians greater latitude and confidence in providing self-represented litigants with legal information without fear of engaging in the unauthorized practice of law.

BOSTON to MUMBAI THE WORLD OF LEGAL INFORMATION



The rest of this newsletter is devoted to the annual meeting in Boston, July 10-14, 2004.

It's baaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaack!

The ever popular silent auction is back. Judy Meadows is this year's coordinator and is busy lining up a wide selection of items to bid on. And this year, you DO NOT have to be in Boston either to donate an item or to bid on one. Donations of items will be accepted until July 7th. Starting June 1st, an email will be sent describing items received up to that time, with minimum bids and details for online bidding. But if you are not going to be in Boston, you'd better bid high because the auction won't close until during the breakfast meeting on July 11th. Items contributed to this point include: subscription to One Person Library, The Visible Librarian, The Legal Information Buyer's Guide and Reference Manual, 5 pound box of chocolate, and a one week stay for two in a guest house in the Helena National Forest. There are also handmade items and two books from Colonial Williamsburg. Remember the money goes for a good cause—travel grants for SIS members to go to next year's AALL meeting. This is an important funding source for the grants .

If you wish to donate an item, email Judy at jmeadows@state.mt.us

Barbara Fritschel



AND THE RECIPIENTS ARE:

The Grants Committee is pleased to announce that 4 grants for \$850 each have been awarded to the following members to assist them in attending the Annual Meeting in Boston this summer. The winners are:

Scott Burgh, Chief Law Librarian, City of Chicago Dept. of Law

Catherine McGuire, Outreach Services Law Librarian, Maryland State Law Library

Jason Raymond, Public Services Law Librarian, Wyoming State Law Library

Patti Worl, Law Librarian, Skagit County Law Library (Mount Vernon, WA)

Funds for this year's grants come from SCCLL's Seattle silent auction, a \$400 donation from William S. Hein & Co., and an appropriation from SCCLL's treasury.

Congratulations to our winners – and if you're going to Boston, please say "hello" to them and stop by Hein's booth to thank Dick Spinelli and other Hein staff for their generous donation.

Jane Colwin
Chair, SCCLL Grants Committee



PROFESSIONAL MATTERS

Conference Tips

by Judith Siess, OPL Editor

from *The One-Person Library: A Newsletter for Librarians and Management* 20(12):7-8, April 2004. ©Information Bridges International, Inc., used with permission

Before the Conference

Put in writing what you want to accomplish at the conference. You'll probably have to do this for your manager in order to get funding for the conference, but even if you don't **have** to do it, **do it!**

Go over the preliminary program **very** thoroughly; marking **every** event that you might want to attend. You can weed it down later. If there is a version of the program on the association web site, use it. Make a chart with each day and time period and list all of these sessions. That way you'll have alternatives.

Don't be tempted to stay at a hotel far from the conference venue in order to save money. You'll spend all your time traveling and miss out on chance meetings with colleagues. Pick a close hotel and share a room with friends or colleagues. (You can find a roommate through some of the electronic lists.)

Look very carefully at the continuing education courses offered before and after the conference. This is a good way to justify to your management the expense of the conference. You can attend two or more CE sessions without additional travel expense or time away from the library. And most of the sessions are very worthwhile.

Make advance appointments with those vendors—or anyone else—you want to see so you don't run out of time or miss them.

Pack a few file folders, lots of business cards (even if you have to make your own, you **must** have cards), an extra case to bring home the paper and souvenirs you accumulate, pens and pencils, a highlighter (yellow is the best color), professional attire, and very comfortable shoes (two pair are even better). You should always wear a jacket with at least **two** pockets—one for your business cards and one for cards you receive. That will spare you the embarrassment of handing out someone else's card.

At the Conference

What should be your priorities at the conference? If it's your first conference, you should probably attend as many sessions as possible. You should also go to the association annual business meeting, just to see how it works. For veteran attendees your priorities should change to first, networking, then exhibits, and last, but not least, the sessions. After all, you have probably heard much of the information at the sessions before.

As soon as you register and get your final program, fill in the room locations on the grid you made before the conference. Be sure to include alternate sessions in case the one session you want to attend is cancelled or doesn't meet your expectations or is so crowded you can't get in. Put all the papers you need for each day in a separate folder and carry just that folder with you.

Don't be afraid to leave a session that isn't what you expected—we've all done it and the presenters will not be offended. Also, if the room is very crowded, you can usually sit on the floor or

(Continued on page 16)

stand at the back—and don't forget that there are often seats at the front, even in a seemingly full room.

If there is one and you don't have a conflict, attend the first timer or new member reception and make a few new friends and get an orientation to the conference from an old hand.

I'm not a fan of the plenary or headline speakers. They are often chosen for their ability to attract the press rather than for how helpful they will be to you. But attending them gives you something in common to talk about with new people you meet for the rest of the conference.

At the exhibits

You can help to “pay” for the conference by getting free searches from exhibitors. Take actual reference questions with you. Vendors will show you their products using canned searches that they know will be successful, but you need to know if the products will answer **your** questions.

I have several rules for the exhibits.

- 1) Start at the left side of the exhibit hall. Most people will start on the right and you will find smaller crowds at the more popular booths.
- 2) Never enter a drawing for something I don't want.

3) Take only the materials you really want to look at or take home. (The quantity of these decreases with the number of conferences you attend.) Yes, you will find the conference a wonderful source of office supplies (pens, pencils, sticky notes, etc.), but at least pretend to be interested in what the vendors are selling before taking their freebies.

“Write on the back of the business cards you pick up to remind you what you learned or what you'd like to follow up on later—even if it's just to visit an exhibitor's website or request a product trial.” (Abrams) But do not do this in front of the person—wait until you are somewhere else.

If you are invited to an exhibitor party or hospitality suite, go! At worst you'll get some food; at best you'll meet the movers and shakers in the library world.

Many vendors display signs saying they are sponsors of a particular program or division of the organization. Thank them for doing this—no conference can operate without vendor sponsorship

Yes, you will find the conference a wonderful source of office supplies (pens, pencils, sticky notes, etc.), but at least pretend to be interested in what the vendors are selling before taking their freebies.

(Continued on page 17)

Networking and Social Events

The conference doesn't end after the last session of the day. Dinner and the hospitality suites and open houses afterwards are just as much a part of the conference as the sessions or exhibits. After all, the most important part of any conference is the **people** you meet. And you won't meet people just sitting in sessions or trolling the exhibits. Spend some time in the lobbies of the conference hotels, especially around mealtimes. See if you can find someone with whom you can go out to lunch or dinner. Many conferences have one evening of "dine-arounds" or "no-host dinners." You can choose a group and/or a restaurant and network your heart out.

Be sure to go to the hospitality suites of the various divisions of the association, even if you aren't a member. You'll meet people and make contacts and, who knows, you might even want to join.

Don't be afraid to walk up to someone and introduce yourself. Abrams suggests these "Ice Breaker Questions:"

- 1) Hi, I'm <yournamehere> and I'm from <yourtownorlibraryhere>. Where are you from?"
- 2) "What's new at your shop?"
- 3) "See anything new at the conference?" "Attend any great sessions?" "Learn something new?"

Network in lines (for food, for coffee, for meetings, etc.) "Don't hoard your business cards—they're like smiles, they only have value when they're given away." (Abrams)

If you have questions about the city or want to find a good restaurant, check the local chapter's hospitality booth. "They know. They live there!" (Abrams)

I usually plan at least one half-day to see the city

or just to get away from the conference. Fortunately, at most conferences there is a time when there is nothing in which I am interested. You need a break to refresh yourself and remind yourself that there is more to life than librarianship.

Additional Tips

If you must have your cell phone with you, make sure you silence it or set it to vibrate. Better yet, leave it in your hotel room so you can concentrate on the conference.

You will want to have a coat or sweater with you, since room temperatures vary widely. A bottle of water is a necessity. All that listening and walking is very drying. (My brother who sells water for a living will hate me, but buy water the first day, then refill it from the tap to save money.)

Nametags belong on your **right** lapel—so people can see them as you shake hands. Hanging your tag from the lanyard often provided puts it too low for most people to read. Take it off when you leave the conference venue. A nametag marks you as an out-of-towner and easy prey for muggers and pickpockets.

When you get home

Write a report or memo to your boss or team and explain the value of the conference to you and what you learned. Be specific. "I learned the first three steps I need to take in order to make our library virtual. I will begin the user survey in two weeks" is much more impressive than "I learned a lot that will help me run the library better." If your

(Continued on page 18)

boss does not require such a report, write it anyway. It is a great way to organize what you learned in your own mind. File one copy, take one home for your personal file, and send one to your boss anyway (and perhaps even to your boss's boss).

Now that you're all revved up and excited about your association, take this chance to get involved locally. (You may have already volunteered for something at the conference, but you need to meet people in your home area as well.) The best way to meet new people is to volunteer. You can start small, as a member of a division committee. Who knows, you may rise all the way to association president some day—making contacts all the way.

Adapted from "SLA First Timer's Hints: Getting the Most out of Your SLA Conference Experience and for Many Years to Come" by **Stephen Abram** [Micromedia ProQuest, Toronto, Ontario, CAN-ADA] and "First Timers Package" created by **Dan Trefethen** [Boeing Air Traffic Management, Seattle, Washington, DC, USA] and **Susan Klopper** [Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, USA] for the Los Angeles SLA International Conference in June 2002.

Editor's note: I would like to thank Judith Siess for allowing us to reprint this article. I was hoping for suggestions from several people, but this article says it all.

Support your SCCLL-SIS sponsored programs in Boston.

As Charlie noted in his Charley's Corner musings, sometimes it seems as if AALL isn't that responsive to state, county or court libraries, focusing on the big academic libraries. That is the value of having special interest sections which can tailor programs to meet the needs of their members. This year in Boston several sessions, either sponsored by the SIS or independently submitted by SIS members, address the issues faced by our libraries. And talk about being timely. Several of these issues were addressed in the latest Information Outlook magazine. The sessions also provide specific, concrete examples you can take back to your boards about the value of these conferences. In Boston check out the following:

Passport to the World of legal information: International legal materials on the Web. Susanne Dryer. Time slot A-3

"Can I get some help here?" Providing Effective Reference Services While Avoiding Unauthorized Practice of Law. Judith Lehosit. Time slot F-4. (For those of us who are interested but do not work in Nevada libraries –see announcement on page 12).

(Continued on page 19)

Marketing the Law Library to the world: getting published in judicial, court and bar publications. Marcus Hochstetler. Time slot I-5.

Lost that Whistle While you Work Feeling? Staff meeting management strategies for library directors and managers. Jean Holcomb. Time slot K-5.

Creating Effective Electronic Presentations. Catherine Lemann. Time Slot: K-6.

The Blog phenomenon. Catherine Lemann. Time slot: G-3

Behind the Scene: The Work of State Appellate Courts in Action. James Fox. Time slot: C-4.

E-Newsletters: What You Need to Know. Amy Hale Janeke. Time slot: E-5.

SCCLL RECEPTION IN BOSTON

TUESDAY, JULY 13, 6:30 TO 8:30 p.m. is the date and time for the SCCLL Reception in Boston. Please save this time to meet and chat with other members of our SIS without pressure from competing meetings and programs. This reception is generously sponsored by Thompson West. Details for this event are being firmed up and you will receive an invitation very soon with the exact location.

I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

Sandy Marz

