

NOCALL News

Northern California Association of Law Libraries
A chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Bianca Randall

I am delighted to begin my term as NOCALL president this year. It's barely started and I already feel like I've learned a lot. True to its goal, NOCALL has given me the opportunity to volunteer and gain valuable experience.

I have a favor to ask of the group. Per [our bylaws](#), NOCALL is required to hold association-wide business meetings four times a year. This year the meetings will be held via Zoom. PLEASE consider joining these meetings.

At the business meetings we require a minimum attendance (a quorum) to vote on matters up for discussion. Our bylaws define a quorum as either 25 active members or 10 percent of our active members, whichever is less. To get anything accomplished, we need people to log on and vote for the various items. I would greatly appreciate if everyone tried to join, schedules permitting, so we're not stuck with too few participants to get anything done.

Additionally, if you'd like to be added to the agenda as a New Business item, please don't hesitate to email me! It would be fantastic to hear your thoughts on a topic relevant to our profession. I have no doubt there is plenty we can learn from each other. Anything you find helpful in your own line of work is likely to be helpful to the rest of us as well.

I'm fortunate to have a very full life outside work. [My spouse is an actor](#). We have a lot of fun working on his lines and getting to know his characters. We're expecting our 5th child this December. Our house is full of little ones, the oldest being 5 years old. One of my boys is autistic and nonverbal so we all work together to understand and support him as much as we can. One of my treasured items is my 4-seater child wagon with canopy. It's a lot of fun to travel with the kids buckled in and listen to their conversations which are a combination of words, babbling, and laughing.

I'm looking forward to working with NOCALL to make it a more efficient organization that serves the educational and career aspirations of its members. Hope you enjoy the beautiful fall season!



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IN THIS ISSUE

Professional Reading in Review 2

Legal Tech Recap 3

Spotlight On Refugio Acker-Ramirez... 5

PROFESSIONAL READING IN REVIEW

Refugio Acker-Ramirez and Kristin Brandt
U.C. Davis Law Library

“The Myth of the ‘Born Digital’: Addressing Student Computer and Digital Literacy,” by Carmen Cole, Emily Mross, & Andrea Pritt, *Journal of New Librarianship* (August 7, 2024), vol. 9, no. 2., pp. 1-13.

Academic librarians at Pennsylvania State University observed a significant gap between assumed and actual digital literacy skills among undergraduate and graduate students. Despite the common perception that students born in the digital age inherently possess advanced technological competencies, the authors’ experiences reveal that many students struggle with basic computing and digital concepts such as file management and information organization. Through case studies involving programming workshops, digital badging initiatives, and research data management training, the authors demonstrate how assumptions about students’ digital skills can lead to frustrations for both educators and students. To help facilitate a better teaching-learning experience, the authors suggest inclusive digital literacy development opportunities that include not assuming digital skills, being proactive in editing instructions to include competencies and software requirements and providing more detailed instructions.

“Developing Data Fluent Lawyers by Teaching Litigation Analytics,” by Peter A. Hook, *University of St. Thomas Law Journal* (Spring 2024), vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 295-333.

This article highlights the critical need for law students to develop technological competence, particularly in data analysis and information technologies, with the end goal of fostering lawyers who are both data-literate and technologically skilled. The author proposes teaching litigation analytics as an effective means to achieve this objective. For librarians interested in implementing such a course, the author shares his personal

experience and observations after having taught the course five times, including curriculum recommendations. The proposed course structure features specific modules, assignments, and a final project, all designed to equip students with skills essential for data-driven advocacy. By engaging with this curriculum, students gain a deeper understanding of litigation analytics and the growing role of technology in legal practice.

“Plain Language Workshop Descriptions: How to Attract Participants From All Disciplines,” by Claire M. Curry, Eugene Albin, bobby reed, Amanda Schilling, Beth Tweedy, & Kristi Wyatt, *C&RL News* (September 2024), pp. 327-331.

Are your training program descriptions clear? Free of jargon? Communicate what potential attendees want to know? STEM librarians at University of Oklahoma Libraries sought to improve their workshop descriptions to make them more understandable and appeal to wider audiences. They came up with three key principles to create “plain language” descriptions: make workshop goals obvious, supplement jargon with explanations, and use broad descriptors rather than words specific to particular disciplines. The authors provide before and after examples as well as concrete recommendations for improving language, making this article a useful read for librarians who seek to improve their publicity materials.

“Library Terms that Users (Don’t) Understand: A Review of the Literature from 2012-2021,” by Courtney McDonald and Nicole Trujillo, *College & Research Libraries* (September 2024), pages 906-929.

This article updates John Kupersmith’s 2011 white paper, “Library Terms That Users Understand,” in the context of web usability. The authors analyzed fifty-one original research studies with findings related to library users’ understanding of library terms. Terms commonly used by libraries, such as “peer reviewed,” “full text,” and “article,” were frequently misunderstood by users. Users were confused by names specific to libraries, such as databases and catalog nicknames. Users preferred icons to words

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but were also frustrated when the icon's meaning wasn't obvious. Overall, users did not understand twice as many terms as they did understand. The authors conclude that the majority of Kupersmith's guidelines remain applicable to library websites, with additional adjustments to account for new technologies.

LEGAL TECH RECAP

Kristie Chamorro, UC Berkeley Law Library

Fall is here, and so are the latest legal tech updates! These past few months there have been notable updates from major players like Bloomberg Law, Lexis, and Thomson Reuters, along with innovations from smaller legal tech companies, including Filevine and Zuva. It's no surprise that AI is powering many of these updates.

As always, please let me know if there are any new topics/trends/tools that you would like to see included in future updates.

Bloomberg Law

In October, Bloomberg Law [introduced](#) a refreshed [Legal Professional Well-Being](#) In-Focus page and a new [Technology License & Agreement Toolkit](#).

Earlier this fall, they [launched](#) AI-generated Complaint Summaries that enable users to view complaint summaries directly on most federal district court and Delaware Court of Chancery complaints.

Centerbase

[Centerbase](#) has expanded its Automated Time Capture feature to include Microsoft Word and Outlook, automatically tracking time spent on emails and document editing. Bob Ambrogi [reported](#) on the new add-ins, highlighting that the integration with Microsoft 365 allows users to automatically capture more time without requiring a change to their workflow.

Henchman

The contract drafting startup [Henchman](#) was recently acquired by LexisNexis and will become

part of Lexis+ AI and [Lexis Create](#), a Microsoft integration. Law360 [reported](#) that the Henchman integration will also be part of [Protégé](#), Lexis' new generative AI assistant. Jean O'Grady [interviewed](#) Henchman's Chief Product Officer and outlined the roadmap of these integrations.

HeinOnline

In September, HeinOnline [unveiled](#) a new U.S. Political & Legal History database, providing a collection of historical and current texts that explore the unique legal, social, and economic histories of all 50 states.

Filevine

[Filevine](#) recently [announced](#) the launch of Depo CoPilot, a new AI assistant that assists lawyers during depositions by providing real-time transcription and analysis. Ambrogi [described](#) this new tool as a "guardian angel" for attorneys during depositions, alerting them to awkwardly phrased questions, inconsistencies in testimony, and the need for follow-up questions. Interested users can join the product waitlist [here](#).

Lexis

One of the [biggest announcements](#) on my radar was the preview launch of [Protégé](#), Lexis' personalized AI assistant. This new tool integrates with Microsoft 365 and document management systems to provide customized work product, document drafting, and workflows. It personalizes user interactions by learning legal specialties, past work, and workflow preferences. Both [O'Grady](#) and [Ambrogi](#) reported on the launch, and in a [recent episode](#) of the Geek In Review, a Lexis VP explains her view that the future of AI lies in personalization.

MyCase

[MyCase](#) recently introduced several new features, including improvements to MyCaseIQ, an AI-powered interface that allows users to query case information conversationally. Ambrogi [highlighted](#) MyCase's enhanced accounting tools and its new integration with Docketwise for immigration case management, and the upcoming beta release of Smart Spend, a feature that links a business credit card to matter-specific expense tracking.

Thomson Reuters

In August, Thomson Reuters [unveiled](#) a “supercharged” CoCounsel 2.0 that it says will work three times faster than its predecessor, deliver more intuitive and nuanced results, and understand complex requests more thoroughly. Reporting on this release includes coverage from [Artificial Lawyer](#), [Ambrogi](#), and [Above the Law](#).

In September, a federal judge [dismissed](#) the remaining antitrust counterclaims filed by ROSS Intelligence in Thomson Reuters’ copyright lawsuit. As a reminder, Thomson Reuters sued ROSS in 2020, accusing the now defunct AI-based legal research company of unlawfully copying content from Westlaw. Both parties have renewed their motions for summary judgment on the copyright claims.

vLex

[vLex](#) announced a major upgrade to Vincent AI that expands its AI-assisted workflows from four to twelve, including contract analysis, deposition review, and 50-state legal surveys, and adds the laws of France, Portugal, and Brazil. [Ambrogi asserted](#) that these updates could potentially make it “the most capable AI assistant in the legal market.” O’Grady [highlighted](#) the launch of Vincent AI in Docket Alarm (VIDA), which integrates Docket Alarm’s vast collection of 820 million legal documents, offering users advanced insights and custom analytics.

For additional information on the upgrade, check out [Ambrogi’s conversation](#) with vLex’s global head of product, Robin Chesterman, and their chief strategy officer, Greg Walters; the Geek in Review’s [Show and Tell](#) with Walters; and a [product walkthrough](#) with Artificial Lawyer.

Wolters Kluwer

[Wolters Kluwer Legal & Regulatory US](#) added generative AI to its [VitalLaw](#) legal research platform, enabling users to chat with legal content, summarize documents, and draft compliance checklists.

[Ambrogi reported](#) on the update, highlighting its conversational capabilities that allow for follow up questions and its pre-vetted “golden answers” to

commonly asked questions that are continually updated by Wolters Kluwer editors.

Zoom

In early October, Zoom [announced](#) new AI features, including AI Companion 2.0, which integrates with Microsoft 365 and Google Docs and allows users to summarize meeting content, capture action items, and automate next steps within the platforms. Zoom also rolled out a [new tasks feature](#) that uses AI to detect, recommend, and complete tasks based on Zoom conversations.

Zuva

[Zuva](#), an AI contract review platform, recently released Zuva Analyze, a new AI feature aimed at in-house legal teams that can analyze a large number of documents at once. [Ambrogi points out](#) that Zuva’s flexible pricing model allows users to choose between subscription or project-based payments. For more details, check out Artificial Lawyer’s [Zuva Analyze product walkthrough](#).

Things You Should Check Out

In September, the [Committee on Relations with Information Vendors](#) (CRIV) [introduced](#) CRIV Connection, a new publication that merges the former CRIV Sheet and CRIV Blog. This biweekly publication will deliver articles covering trends, insights, and updates from the information vendor landscape. Law librarians are encouraged to contribute feedback and articles to help make CRIV Connection a dynamic community resource.

In June, I did a short demonstration of one of my favorite GenAI tools, [Notebook LM](#) in a LIT-SIS AALL webinar. Notebook LM allows users to upload various types of source materials, including Google Docs, Google Slides, PDFs, and website URLs. It then grounds its responses on the uploaded content, acting as an “expert” on the provided material. Recent updates, including the ability to [generate a podcast episode](#) from uploaded content, have generated media buzz, including coverage by [The Washington Post](#), [TechCrunch](#), and [Greg Lambert](#), of 3 Geeks and a Law Blog.

Refugio Acker-Ramirez

UC Davis Mabie Law Library

What have you enjoyed the most from being involved with NOCALL?

I am new to northern California and it's been great attending the NOCALL programs and meeting folks in person that I've only known by name through the listserv.

If you were not working as a law librarian, what would you most likely be doing?

I would probably be a YouTuber and create content related to a DIY projects.

Who or what has had the greatest impact on your law librarian career?

There are several people who have helped me along the way, but Tibisay Boggio stands out the most. When I was just starting out in my career and knew little about legal research, she took a chance on me and hired me for a job at a law firm. I won't lie—there were times early on when I felt like a fish out of water. However, Tibisay was incredibly supportive and patient, guiding me through the learning process and teaching me the ropes. I'm not sure I would have stuck it out in law librarianship without her mentorship.

Is there anything that most people don't know about you that you would like to share?

In my spare time, I enjoy tackling small DIY projects. As a teenager, my brother and I installed tile in our parents' home. More recently, I've updated the kitchen in our previous home with new floor tile, counters, and painted cabinets and also revamped our landscaping to be drought tolerant.

What is your favorite meal?

I'm a sucker for sandwiches—they're my ultimate comfort food!

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