



NOCALL *News*

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

March - April 2008

Volume 28, Issue 4

President's Message

Spring Is In the Air

Kelly Browne and the Spring Institute Committee are commended for organizing a great Spring Institute! Held on March 28th in Napa at the Meritage Resort, the theme was Project Management. Ellen Platt and partner Terry facilitated pre-conference bocce games. We had so much fun that we are planning for more bocce at AALL in Portland.

The Government Relations Committee lead by Michele Finerty organized an informative NOCALL/SLA Sunshine Week Program on March 21st. The "Government Secrecy: Censoring Your Right to Know" web cast made up the first part of the program followed by a luncheon panel of local speakers who are open government advocates.

There is a FREE Lunch

Our annual membership meeting will be held once again at the Marines' Memorial Club on Wednesday May 7th. Thanks to Craig Griffith and Thomson/West for supporting this event. The registration deadline is May 2nd. For registration information, visit : <http://nocall.org/2008MayBusinessMtg.doc>.

Upcoming Fall Workshop

The Education Committee is already working on next year's Fall Workshop. Thomson/West has offered to secure Attorney James Wagstaffe to do a workshop on Romancing the Room based on his best selling book by the same title. The workshop will cover communicating effectively in your community, at your workplace and with your family. Mr. Wagstaffe has developed award-winning pointers on how to engage listeners by Romancing the Room. Learn to make positive first impressions, win your audiences over with attention sustainers and get them to say "yes" to your points for the long term.

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If you missed Mr. Wagstaffe at the January business meeting let me tell you he is thoroughly engaging with humor and insight. Don't miss this opportunity. Tibisay Turner will have more information as details are finalized.

Join In

It is never too late to join a committee. NOCALL values your participation. There are discreet tasks with every committee that I promise will not suck the life out of you. Check with the chair to see how you can participate!

NOCALL News

The NOCALL News is published five times a year by the Northern California Association of Law Libraries, a chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries, and is a benefit of membership.

The Northern California Association of Law Libraries assumes no responsibility for the statements and opinions advanced by the contributors to the association's publications. Editorial views do not necessarily represent the official position of the Northern California Association of Law Libraries.

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NOCALL News 2007-2008 Submission deadlines:

Sept/Oct - September 7
Nov/Dec - November 2
Jan/Feb - January 4
Mar/April - March 7
May/June - May 2



MUSINGS FROM MARK

Mark Mackler
California Department of Justice
San Francisco

To Begin on a Sad Note... NOCALL member Ruth Borger passed away on Thursday, January 3, after a courageous battle with cancer. Ruth worked for the California Department of Justice for over 19 years. She was an excellent librarian and researcher. Ruth joined us in May 1993 as the first full-time librarian in the Oakland office. In January 1997, she transferred to the Sacramento office as the Legislative History Librarian. The legislative histories she compiled assisted DOJ attorneys statewide. Her extensive knowledge of this area made her a special asset to the Department, and the hundreds of histories she compiled will continue to be a valuable resource. In Ruth's memory, NOCALL has made a donation to the Sacramento SPCA. (This note has been adapted from an e-mail sent by Marian Sawyer, Law Librarian.)

Paralegal Busted... A paralegal who posed as a lawyer has been sentenced to five years probation because he returned \$150,000 of the money he was paid by the Manhattan law firm that employed him. Brian Valery pleaded guilty to grand larceny. He admitted that for two years he was paid more than \$200,000 from Anderson Kill & Olick. He claimed that he had earned his law degree from Fordham University School of Law. Valery could have received 15 years in prison, but the judge promised him probation if he paid back at least \$150,000 by the sentencing date. Valery still has to repay another \$75,000.

Archivist Charged... A New York State archivist has admitted stealing hundreds of historical artifacts from the New York State Library in Albany. He sold the materials on the Internet to pay for household improvements and his daughter's \$10,000 credit card bill. Daniel Lorello was suspended from his job after admitting that he sold two copies (1835 and 1837) of Davy Crockett's Almanack last year. His scheme was uncovered when he tried to sell an 1823 letter from Vice President John C. Calhoun on EBay. A Virginia history buff (and attorney) saw it and notified authorities. So far, the New York State Library has recovered 263 items.

And Finally (I Love New York)... The scene is a press conference being held by New York Governor-designate David Paterson. In a few days, Paterson will be sworn in as Governor of New York. Reporter: Governor Paterson, have you ever patronized a prostitute? Paterson: Only the lobbyists.

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

Nora Levine

WWW.LIBRARYTHING.COM

LibraryThing is a website that does something most people would never expect: it makes building a database of your personal book collection easy and fun. Of course, some librarians have been cataloging and recording their home collections for years, in addition to the collection at the office! What makes this website's database (or "virtual library") better? For one, it allows you to pull book information from 255 sources to populate your virtual bookshelf. (The default is Amazon.) Data can be sorted like an Excel spreadsheet, converted to display only book covers, and comments or tags added. It also lets you peek into your friends' and some of your favorite authors' bookshelves.

One of the most interesting sub-applications are the BookSuggester and UnSuggester (www.librarything.com/unsuggester) which recommend books you might like or especially dislike based on what you've entered. For instance, LibraryThing's data shows that if you own Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason you're likely to also have The Phenomenology of Mind by Hegel, but you probably wouldn't buy Confessions of a Shopaholic by Sophie Kinsella. With a blog, message boards, early reviewer programs, interesting statistics about your collection, and book reviews, LibraryThing is more than just a way to organize your personal library. LibraryThing is free for your first two hundred books. If you're interested enough to enter more than two hundred books into this website, the \$10 yearly or \$25 lifetime memberships are a small price to pay.

WWW.GOODREADS.COM

Goodreads is similar to LibraryThing in that it's a website where you enter books you've read or are currently reading, but it is designed to keep a record of what you've read, and when, and what you thought of it, rather than to create a database of books you own. If you have a lot of friends with similar taste in books, this is a wonderful tool for learning what they're reading, and how they would rate it, and discovering new books you might never have found on your own. On the other hand, if you're like me and have vaguely shameful reading habits, this site may not be your thing. I, for one, don't want other people to realize how much terrible genre fiction I go through on a weekly basis. Also, when signing up for this site, they ask for your email address and password, though you can bypass giving

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them your password. If they get it, they will spam your entire address book. They also email updates about what your friends are reading on a too-frequent basis unless you change the default email notification settings. This site is entirely free, but because of the spamming issues, I wouldn't wholeheartedly recommend it.

Jocelyn Stilwell

Nossaman Guthner Knox & Elliott LLP

ILLIUM / OLYMPUS, a duology, by Dan Simmons

Enter the world of Mahnmut, a small, sentient robotic humanoid who is fascinated by Shakespeare and wonders what it is like to be human. Mahnmut comes from Europa, the ice-covered oceanic moon of Jupiter. The meter-tall moravec (sentient robots named after robotics visionary Hans Moravec) navigates his submersible, The Dark Lady across Europa's world ocean under the frozen ice crust to attend an important gathering of moravec leaders from the Consortium – five sentient robot-inhabited Galilean moons of Jupiter. His best friend, the huge dark, horseshoe crab-shaped moravec Orphu, who comes from volcanic moon Io, is there along with numerous others. They've been monitoring and detecting major quantum disturbances coming from Mars, and they need to investigate and act on this problem that could threaten the stability of space throughout the solar system. Neither Orphu nor Mahnmut know exactly what the mission is; their role is to land on the planet and perform services to the other moravecs onboard. Just before they reach Mars, a chariot riding god, Zeus, sends a bolt of energy that destroys their ship. Mahnmut saves Orphu as the others die with the atomized ship, and the two manage to crash land in Mars' Tethys Sea with the Dark Lady submersible to begin their adventures with the Little Green Men and the Olympian gods. Meanwhile, resurrected 20th Century Iliad scholar, Thomas Hockenberry and other resurrected scholics monitor the daily goings on in the war between the Achaeans (ancient Greeks) and the Trojans in the famous ten-year siege of Illium, noting discrepancies between Homer's accounts and actual events, and reporting these to the gods. Housed in barracks hidden on Mount Olympus, they daily teleport to Illium to gather information. Thomas is given special powers one day, and he decides to go rogue, setting in motion a chain of events that will turn former enemies, the Greeks and Trojans, into allies in a war against the gods themselves. Meanwhile on future earth, old-style humans living in peace and plenty, served by automatons and wanting for nothing, watch this dramatic war through Turin cloths that they place on their faces while lying down, little realizing that this war is for real and that they will someday

be dragged into it. We follow the evolution of flirtatious Daemon, butterfly catcher and womanizer extraordinaire; Ada, his beautiful cousin; Harman, a man celebrating his 99th birthday who looks no more than thirty years old; and Hannah, a friend of Ada's, as Harman leads them away from this self-absorbed existence into high adventure and danger. They find the legendary Wandering Jew, Savi, who is over 1,400 years old. Savi is a survivor of the Final Fax (people travel by replication from one fax node to another). The Final Fax went wrong when the last living humans, mostly Jews, were trapped in a beam of tachyon energy and taken out of the post-Rubicon virus-depopulated world. Savi teaches them to start thinking and takes them to faraway places where they become deeply involved in freeing humankind from its childlike dependence on treacherous, unnatural creatures who will turn on them as the humans awaken from a millennium and a half of slumber and idle merriment.

Drawing from the works of Shakespeare, Proust, Nabokov and others, the author takes us on a multi-part journey through space and time, feasting with gods and fighting demon monsters like the murderous Caliban, the hell-beast Setebos, and making common cause with the Internet-born Prospero and his borrowed assistant, Ariel, representing the essence of the biosphere, as the humans and moravecs struggle against monstrous forces and horrific creatures to save sentient life on earth and protect space from collapsing into chaos. Meet the Titans and the mighty Olympian gods, post-humans who have self-evolved into mighty gods, able to regenerate their bodies to achieve 'immortality' using the same healing tank technology that the old-style humans on earth benefit from when they are healed and regenerated every twenty years. Wander into the affairs of mighty Achilles, scourge of Troy and the bane of many immortals, impossible to kill except –well, you know. Meet Penthiselia and her Amazon warriors bent on destroying Achilles. Follow Achilles on his unexpected quest to revive slain Penthiselia, as he and Olympian god Hephaestus make common cause. Fall in love with and get betrayed by lovely, scheming Helen of Troy. Meet noble Hector, aging King Priam, brother of Hector, Diephobos, and many more noble personages of this lost age as they struggle to survive and adapt as Hockenberry's meddling changes the course of the Trojan War and brings the Illium and Olympus stories together with the fate of the moravec beings and the remaining humans on earth.

These two books are page-turners. If you appreciate literature, philosophy, cracking good science fiction and high adventure, you will love Illium and Olympus. Just remember to read them in order!

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Readers who have read *Hyperion*, *The Fall of Hyperion*, *Endymion*, *The Rise of Endymion* and other Dan Simmons stories will find this saga just as compelling and entertaining. And if you haven't read these Dan Simmons books yet, what are you waiting for?

Greg Fite

Bernard E. Witkin Alameda County Law Library

AN INCOMPLETE REVENGE by Jacqueline Winspear

This is the fifth novel in the Maisie Dobbs series and the best yet. As a detective in England following WWI Maisie has been an interesting character all along, but she really shows her increasing maturity in this story. The twists and turns kept me guessing, and seeing how Maisie coped with several events that began in her past and culminated in this book made the story even more interesting. This is a series that is best read from the beginning even though it's possible to start with any of the books. The previous titles are *Maisie Dobbs*, *Birds of a Feather*, *Pardonable Lies*, and *Messenger of Truth*.

Ruth Girill

Continuing Education of the Bar

THE KING IN THE WINDOW by Adam Gopnik

This is a book about a war in Paris between the Windows and the Mirrors and an average boy who is selected as the king of the Window Wraiths. The story shows real character development in the boy, which is interesting, and it includes some engaging descriptions of higher principles of ethics and physics. I read this with my son. It was a very slow start, but we persevered and it paid off. There are some good messages in this book, but it is not preachy. The moral portrays that the boy can learn to think critically and solve problems. I also like the setting and the freedom that the parents gave their son.

THE LOST MADONNA by Kelly Jones

This is a book about an art professor whose life is changed after a huge natural disaster. She encounters a flood by being in the wrong place at the wrong time or, depending how you think about it, the right place at the right time. One of the things that I like about this book is that it is a mystery in which no one dies. I think it is a lot harder to write a mystery where you can't fill pages with long descriptions of gore and forensic science, but you have to fill the pages with thoughtful writing. I do think that there are a lot of unresolved issues in this book. For example, I didn't believe that the main character felt as strongly about her love interest as she said she did. I thought that supporting characters and their relationships could have been developed more deeply.

PS I LOVE YOU by C. Ahern

I missed seeing the movie, but also didn't hear flattering reviews of it. I loved this book — set in Ireland -- about an Irish woman whose husband dies. It centers on her, but you get a flavor of how the other people in the couple's lives feel about his loss as well. It was very sad, but I think that the author represented the grief of the wife very well. I liked the hook in the story of the wife being given tasks to keep her going and think that would be a good thing for us to think about if we found ourselves in the same situation.

WHITETHORN WOODS by Maeve Binchy

This book is similar in style to other of Binchy's books and reminds me quite a bit of *The Lilac Bus*. In this novel, the local small village, whose main street is crammed with traffic all the time, is faced with the changes that will come about if a planned highway bypass goes forward. Many different characters are explored. All are connected to the village, but not all the stories about individuals have to do with the bypass. I like reading the different points of view as presented in the book. Binchy is a nice observer of people's lives and she includes minor details that are important to the character, but that other people don't notice. I think we all have those details, or secrets, in our lives.

WILD GOOSE CHASE by Terri Thayer

This book has a deeper story than is hidden behind the stereotypical "quilt lady". The main character, Dewey, has a lot going on and a lot to deal with. Not all of the issues are clear or straightforward at the beginning. As the story progresses, it is obvious that she is suffering from a tragic event in her recent past that her family is not discussing, as well as a layoff from her high tech Silicon Valley job. I think that the underlying story of Dewey and her life are the real interesting part of the book, though the murders bring on an interesting twist. Murder is not, usually, associated with quilts, quilt shows, and quilt ladies. This book shows that quilts are an industry and industries are not wholly comprised of nice people who just want to help each other.

Jaye Lapachet

Coblentz, Patch, Duffy, and Bass LLP

NORTH STAR CONSPIRACY, by Miriam Grace Monfredo

Readers of historical mysteries will probably enjoy *North Star Conspiracy*, a novel about the town librarian in Seneca Falls, New York, mid-19th century. This novel, about fugitive slaves and the Underground Railroad, has wonderful twists and turns, but also has excellent character development. I really had no idea how the plot would turn out, always a pleasure for a mystery. Fictional characters interact with actual historical figures, including several who lived in upstate New York -- Frederick Douglass, Susan

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B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Monfredo has done her homework, as the storyline seems very well researched. It was a great way to learn history. For example, I thought runaway slaves were searched for while still in the South, but that they were fairly safe once they got to the North and closer to Canada. I don't think that anymore.

The first novel in this series, Seneca Falls Inheritance, covers the first women's rights convention, which took place in Seneca Falls in 1848.

Paula Lichtenberg
Keker & Van Nest LLP



PROFESSIONAL READING IN REVIEW
 By Elisabeth McKechnie and Susan Llano
 U.C. Davis Law Library

"Lawyers Face Technology Overload: Survey" by John Flynn Rooney, Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, volume 154, no. 58, March 24, 2008, 3/24/08 CHIDL B 1.

This article gives a brief review of the new LexisNexis funded Workplace Productivity Survey, which determined that 80 percent of legal professionals feel overloaded by too much information. Additional problems for firms include incoming law clerks and new attorneys insufficiently trained to use commercial databases efficiently as well as clients who object to paying for this type of research (since, to the clients, the internet is just as good and is "free"). The **2008 Workplace Productivity Survey** can be downloaded at http://www.lexisnexis.com/literature/pdfs/LexisNexis_Workplace_Productivity_Survey_2_20_08.pdf

"'Copyfraud' and Public Domain Works" by Carol Ebbinghouse, Searcher, January 1, 2008. 1/1/08 SEARCHER 40.

Although the practice is illegal, many information providers are charging copyright fees to materials that are in the public domain. Often the user simply pays the fee because, although s/he suspects the item is in the public domain, it's too difficult to double-check. This practice has been labeled "copyfraud" by law professor Jason Mazzone in a *New York University Law Review* article. Although such claims may be accompanied by threats of litigation or cease and desist letters by the putative 'owner', this article supplies

instructions and an extensive list of sources that an information professional can consult to determine whether a work is truly in the public domain.

"In Series of Videos, Supreme Court Justices Make Their Case" by Tony Mauro Legal Times, March 11, 2008. Found at <http://www.law.com/jsp/scm/PubArticleSCM.jsp?id=1205322370871>

Legal writing guru, Bryan Garner, managed to interview eight of the nine Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court about their often-conflicting likes and dislikes in the briefs they are called upon to read. In this article, Mauro gives a brief synopsis of the high points of the interviews, for example, that while Justice Scalia hates having a summary of argument at the beginning of a brief, Justice Thomas loves it. Judging these interviews to be a rich source of material for their classes, Legal Research and Writing instructors are busily adapting the interviews and awaiting transcripts from Garner.

"Writers Blocked" by Jens B. Koepke, Los Angeles Daily Journal, vol. 121, no.53, March 20, 2008, p.7.

Law students taking legal writing better pay attention in class! This short article warns that both the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and the California appellate courts appear to be losing patience with sloppy briefs that violate court rules. According to the author, recent cases from both courts show that they are trying to actively enforce their rules by "striking briefs, dismissing appeals, refusing to consider arguments and sanctioning attorneys and parties." The article cites the language used by the courts in striking these briefs including, "virtually no legal arguments," "opening brief fails to support his assertion by citation to argument or authority" and "brief is a textbook example of what an appellate brief should not be." Of course, the courts do tend to be more lenient toward submissions from pro se appellants.

The newsletter, "Law Librarians in the New Millennium" by ThomsonWest will no longer be published in print, but will be strictly electronic. To see the current issue, archived issues or to subscribe to the newsletter, go to their website: <http://west.thomson.com/newsletters/llnm/>

LOST IN TRANSLATION

By Robyn M. Moltzen

Sacramento County Public Law Library

Originally printed in the Winter 2008 issue of SCCLL News

Law libraries and the courts must have clear communication between each other in order to provide adequate service to users. Even though the two institutions are often in close physical proximity to each other, sometimes even located within the same building, there is a vast, empty vacuum between them. Upon exiting the court line, facilitators' office, or self-help center, a person will have a clear understanding of what instructions they were given by court staff. Not surprisingly, when they arrive at the law library, what they think they were told to ask for is indeed something entirely different and often does not exist. The Sacramento County Public Law Library and the Sacramento County Family Law Facilitators office lovingly refer to the physical space between us as the "Sea of Forgetfulness," since people often forget what they were told as they walk between our respective locations.

In one of our typical bi-monthly meetings at the law library, public services staff was brainstorming on ways to help alleviate this issue of "forgetfulness." In our ensuing discussion, we were trying to think of solutions that would take the burden off of library and court users by having the library and court staffs take more responsibility to ensure that the exact referral or suggestion was communicated. During our brainstorming, it was mentioned we needed some physical connection between the agencies. Someone stated that we needed a pad similar to what a doctor would use, so that boxes could be


checked, a "prescription" written out, and physically given to the person to take away with them. Library assistant Natalie Head stated "a legal prescription" – thus our Legal Prescription Pads were born!

After collaborating with the courts, we have since created a customized Legal Prescription Pad for the different referring agencies, including the Family Law Facilitators office and the VLSP Civil Self-Help Center located in the Sacramento Superior Court. We also have a generic "prescription" pad that we use for other agency referrals and for marketing purposes when we give a presentation, or attend a luncheon, etc.

Our prescription pads include our logo, hours and location, check boxes for suggested supplemental materials or books, and most importantly, it includes "ask a librarian for more information on..." and provides enough free space so that the referrer can put a brief description of what they were suggesting the user research once they arrived at the law library. Also, for our customized pads, it lists the referring agency, so that we can track who is using our Legal Prescription Pads, and how often.

The law library is currently keeping statistics on how often the prescriptions are used and what the most often asked questions are. Our librarians will use this valuable information to

create Legal Resource Guides, sample pleadings, 24/7 reference scripts, and other documents as necessary. We are hoping that in collaborating with the courts and other referring agencies, and through continued use of our "Legal Prescriptions" we can turn the "Sea of Forgetfulness" into just a small trickle.



A legal prescription

Ask a reference librarian for information on:

Suggested supplemental materials:

book title _____


website _____

other (please explain) _____

Main Library

813 6th St.
Sacramento, CA
95814
(916) 874-6011

Mon-Thurs
8:00am - 8:00pm
Friday
8:00am - 5:00pm
Sat
9:00am - 4:00pm



**SACRAMENTO
COUNTY
PUBLIC LAW
LIBRARY**

www.sadaw.org

Branch Library
Family Relations
Court House
(Family & Probate
Law only)
3341 Power Line Rd.
Rm. 112
Sacramento, CA
95826
(916) 875-3490
Mon-Fri
8:30am - 12:30pm
and
1:30pm - 4:30pm



MEMBER PUBLICATIONS

“Librarians... Your Guide at an Information Crossroads,” by Jaye Lapachet, Manager of Library Services at Coblentz Patch Duffy & Bass LLP, and Camille Reynolds, Director of Research & Information Services at Nossaman Guthner Knox & Elliott LLP. *Recorder’s Legal Pro*, page 10-11, March 17, 2008.

“San Francisco Law Library Hosts Law Practice Management Section Collection,” by Ruth Geos, Reference Librarian at the San Francisco Law Library. *BASF Bulletin*, page 1, vol. 3, no. 4, April 2008.

“Legislative History Notes, Correspondence Found in Legislative Bill Files,” by Carolina Rose. *San Francisco Daily Journal*, page 5, March 28, 2008.

“NOCALL/SLA Hold Exciting Sunshine Week Program,” by Michele Finerty, Gordon D. Schaber Law Library, McGeorge School of Law. *AALL Washington E-Bulletin*, <http://www.aallnet.org/aallwash/ebulletin032708.pdf> Vol. 2008, Issue 3, March 27, 2008.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The names of members who have joined NOCALL since publication of the 2006-2007/2007-2008 NOCALL Directory and since the last newsletter are listed below as well as changes and corrections for continuing members. Any corrections changes or additions to the Directory should be sent to:

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Directory Update: Final proofreading of the directory is just about done. Your patience is greatly appreciated while we finalize the directory for shipping VERY soon. Thanks!

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WE NEED YOUR NEWS!

If you or your staff members have attended a seminar, published an article, received an award,
or if you have done anything interesting, personally or professionally, please let us know!
Submit articles of any length to Mary Pinard at mpinard@saclaw.org

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