



# NOCALL *News*

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

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## President's Message

Well, here I am at the swan song of my presidency. I have passed the gavel into the capable hands of Holly Riccio. I would like to start by saying what an honor it has been to serve as your president this last year. NOCALL is an amazing group to work with and is always looking to break new ground and think outside the box. For example, with the addition of networking round tables at the Spring Institute, not only did we utilize unused space, but we were able to provide an opportunity for those who could not afford to attend the greater Spring Institute, thus achieving a key educational goal for our membership. While this might seem small, it is an example of the dynamic nature of NOCALL, and that keeps us going and growing.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our Board Members, Committee Chairs, and Committee Members who have served over this last year. Without your time and energy, we would not have such a vibrant chapter. Your work does not go unnoticed. I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage those of you out in the NOCALL community who have not served, or for whom it has been awhile, please consider giving your name to Holly for a committee appointment. Don't assume that you do not have enough time. There are opportunities to get involved be it a small, one-time activity or chair of a larger committee. Express an interest and we will find a way for you to be involved. We want your ideas!

For those attending AALL, a list of NOCALL programs will be published prior to the conference and I hope you will find time to support your fellow NOCALL members in their involvement. If you are presenting or coordinating a program at AALL, please let Holly know and she can share with the list.

I would like to close by congratulating Diane Rodriguez on her appointment to the AALL Executive Board and Michele Finerty on her AALL Member at Large candidacy. Please remember to vote.

Thank you once again for allowing me to serve and I look forward to continuing my NOCALL involvement over the years ahead.

Shannon

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## 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.

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**MUSINGS FROM MARK**

**Mark Mackler**  
**California Department of Justice**  
**San Francisco**

**WORDS FROM PLATO...**I did some housecleaning (office-cleaning?) and found this old article from *3 Geeks and a Law Blog*. The writer took an ancient Plato quote from Phaedrus, and updated it. The original quotation concerned the development of the alphabet and writing. This updated version is relevant to the challenges we face in our profession today: For this discovery of yours (Google) will create a laziness in the attorneys' souls because they will no longer desire to use their research skills. They will trust external wikis and blogs rather than remember their training. The results that the search engine returns through the use of a few keywords are not adding to their skills but rather diminishes their abilities. The answers they receive are not authoritative but only attempt to give the appearance of authority. They will achieve millions of results and will skim the top few. They will think they are searching all of mankind's knowledge, but in truth they will barely scratch the surface. They will tire of the true researcher and they will believe the wisdom of Google is the new reality.

**HOW NOT TO WIN OVER THE JUSTICES OF THE SIXTH DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL...**I chuckled as I read the very short unpublished opinion in *Aster v. Ward* (August 19, 2010). "Almost nothing about the appeal can be discerned...Aster failed to amend his complaint within the allotted time...The record contains none of the relevant pleadings or moving papers. No authority is cited; under the heading "Table of Authorities" appears the legend 'No authorities are listed. Common sense is assumed.' THE JUDGMENT IS AFFIRMED."

**AND SPEAKING OF COURTS AND WORDS...**Professor Alex Long of the University of Texas has studied the use of popular song lyrics in judicial opinions. According to Long, what songwriter is the wordsmith of choice among judges and legal academics? It turns out that Bob Dylan easily beat other musicians such as the Beatles and Bruce Springsteen. "Everyone wants to believe that the music they listen to says something about who they are," says Long, whose research focuses on how political songwriting is used in the legal system. "Dylan was popular at the time the judges were coming of age, and the chance to throw in a line from your favorite artist is tempting."

**WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM PUBLIC LIBRARIANS?...**

This was the question posed in a recent article in *Information Outlook*. So, what can we law librarians, the Navy SEALs of our profession, possibly learn from our public library brethren?

- (1) *Cultivate your friends of the Library*  
 This is a skill at which public librarians excel. One can never make or have too many friends. A special library will disappear once it becomes irrelevant to its users. Having friends or champions can help ensure that this doesn't happen.
- (2) *Stress information literacy and assessment*  
 As more and more resources become accessible from users' desktops and free online resources compete with databases, we need to educate our users more than ever.
- (3) *Learn to work on a shoestring budget*  
 If they're real cost-savers, take advantage of new technologies and staffing models.
- (4) *Become one with the community you serve*  
 Be visible. Be involved.

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**TECH TALK:  
 SHOULD LAW LIBRARIES  
 PURCHASE KINDLES?**

**David Holt**  
**Santa Clara University — School of Law**

With the drop in prices for e-readers, there is a lot of discussion about what role e-books and other electronic media will play in law libraries. Although e-readers have been on the market for a number of years now, it has only been recently that the prices on these units have dropped to a point where there is widespread appeal. There has even been movement by large legal publishers, notably WestLaw, to integrate e-readers into their products. For example, users of WestLaw Next can export all printable materials to their Kindle e-mail address. This is very convenient for reading long law review articles or cases although the ability to annotate or make notes is still very rudimentary.

This column aims to answer two basic questions about these e-readers: should law libraries think about purchasing e-book/e-readers and how can we improve the experience of reading legal materials electronically?

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For the first question, it seems that libraries would be well advised to wait until this nascent market further stabilizes. As e-ink based e-readers compete with multi-function devices, such as smartphones and tablet computers, we may find that e-readers will decline in popularity. This does not, of course, mean that there will also be a decline in electronic materials - just that these materials will be read with other devices.

Additionally, although legal publishers seem eager to integrate e-readers and smartphones into their services, they are notably less eager to actually produce e-book legal materials. WestLaw is [experimenting with electronic casebooks](#) but they are presently viewable only on computers and not mobile devices. Essentially these e-books produced by Westlaw are scanned copies of their print titles. As they are also protected by DRM technology, they are not exportable to any mobile device or e-reader.

Consequently, much of the value in using an e-reader for legal research is reading documents exportable from WestLaw Next and PDF documents. WestLaw has made exporting documents to a Kindle rather easy and straightforward. Users just simply click on the Print icon and select [Send to Kindle](#) as the export option. They then enter the Kindle's email address (remember, to use [XXXX@free.kindle.com](#) to avoid 3G network charges) and the document is sent wirelessly and automatically synced with the Kindle. I find the experience of reading law review articles or cases on the Kindle to be rather pleasant as long as you don't need to make annotations or highlight text.

One of the nice features of the Kindle, however, is the ability to read PDF files natively. This is a great feature because you can send PDFs to your Kindle knowing that the formatting will remain the same. A problem, however, is the size of the Kindle screen (this applies to the Nook as well). The cheaper unit has only a 6 screen which makes the text of a PDF quite small and difficult to read. Fortunately, this problem can be alleviated by cropping out the margins from the PDF file. This gives more room for the actual text and will make it easier to read. Sadly, neither the Kindle nor the Nook do this automatically to PDF files. However, there is a tool called [BRISS](#) (yes, it is a circumcision joke) that will automatically crop the edges off the PDF file and make it much more appropriate for reading on an e-reader.

In summation, it appears much too soon for law libraries to seriously consider purchasing e-readers. Because this market is moving so quickly, it would be wise for libraries to wait and see where it goes. However, there is present value in using e-readers for legal research and librarians can help their patrons to improve the reading experience on these devices.

## PROFESSIONAL READING IN REVIEW

By Elisabeth McKechnie and Susan Llano  
U.C. Davis Law Library

**“Incompetent Research Skills Curb Users’ Problem Solving,”** by Jakob Nielsen, *Today Online*, Alertbox, April 11, 2011, available at “useit.com” at <http://www.useit.com/alertbox/search-skills.html>

Intending to update the Fundamental Guidelines for Web Usability seminar, Nielsen conducted user testing in Asia-Pacific. He discovered that users changed search strategy only about 1% of the time. The better the search algorithm, the worse the user response was, since the users assumed that whatever the search returns must be the answer. The article discusses a variety of areas in which the average user needs training from information professionals, including the example of a hapless attorney who waded through multiple pages without either changing strategy or finding an answer.

**“Amazon Seller Lists Book at \$23,698,655.93—Plus Shipping,”** by John D. Sutter, *CNN Tech*, April 25, 2011, available at <http://www.cnn.com/2011/TECH/web/04/25/amazon.price.algorithm/index.html?iref=NS1>

The vagaries of online book pricing are explained at last! The book advertised at this mind-boggling price was NOT a Gutenberg Bible or any book you'd recognize. *The Making of a Fly: The Genetics of Animal Design* is a relatively obscure book with an overblown sticker price because of two dueling pricing algorithms, which managed to raise the price well beyond what the book is worth or could ever sell for. Ever wonder how the price is set for that obscure book you're buying at Amazon for the senior partner? Here's your explanation, as the article delves into the secrets of pricing algorithms and how they make online booksellers possible.

**“Interviews with United States Supreme Court Justices,”** by Bryan A. Garner, *The Scribes Journal of Legal Writing*, 2010. Available at <http://legaltimes.typepad.com/files/garner-transcripts-1.pdf>

Bryan A. Garner has published the complete transcripts of his interviews conducted in 2006 and 2007 of eight of the nine sitting Supreme Court Justices (Justice Souter is not included). These transcripts are available as a free download from the link above and are definitely worth a look! They give interesting insights into what the Justices like/dislike, like this quote from Chief Justice Roberts, “I have yet to put down a brief and say, “I wish that had been longer.”

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**“The Secret Life of Libraries,”** by Bella Bathurst, *The Observer*, May 1, 2011, available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2011/may/01/the-secret-life-of-libraries>

With the economy still hurting, and libraries increasingly on the chopping block, Bella Bathurst writes a humorous and insightful article on why libraries are worth preserving. She claims that some of the confusion about the worth of libraries stems from people not knowing what they do and who they serve. But a library is more than a collection of books, “the libraries’ most powerful asset is the conversation they provide – between books and readers, between children and parents, between individuals and the collective world.”

**“How to Reach an Audience,”** by Adrian Dayton, *National Law Journal*, v.33, no.34, April 25, 2011, p.3. Available by subscription at <http://www.law.com/jsp/nlj/index.jsp>

Adrian Dayton, author of the book *Social Media for Lawyers*, spoke with Lou Hampton, a message consultant and provides six common mistakes that destroy a speaker’s credibility. Among the mistakes speakers make are, “failure to pay attention to the audience” and “failure to have a good opening”. Dayton claims avoiding the six mistakes will not necessarily make you a good speaker, but it will help make your speech memorable.

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## NEWBIE IN THE HOUSE!!

**Erin A. Brown**

**Office of Legislative Counsel Law Library**

December of 2010 I breathed a huge sigh of relief because I had FINALLY completed my MLIS via San Jose State while working full-time as a Library Technical Assistant with the Office of Legislative Counsel in Sacramento. I was thrilled to be done with school but also excited to start working on more professional aspects of law librarianship. To that end I thought that I should get my feet wet so what better way to jump start my career than to attend NOCALL’s Spring Institute? Luckily my work paid for me to go!

It’s now a few days before the Institute and I was beginning to feel butterflies in my stomach but I kept receiving all of these funny emails about events taking place during the Spring Institute such as the first-time-ever round table discussions. Hmmm...I thought, maybe I should email one of the chairs and ask them what the attire for the event is and maybe throw in a suggestion as to a possible topic for a roundtable. I did both and I am a thrilled I did. Ellen Platt was very warm and welcoming in her email and told me to look her up when arrived at the institute.

When I arrived, I found Ellen and she introduced me around, she was very helpful and friendly so I felt more at ease even though I still was a tad nervous. I ventured to the roundtable discussions which I thought were a great idea because as a newbie, I was able to meet a great group of librarians on a more intimate level – and I actually had people to eat lunch with! The topic of the roundtable I was in dealt with strategies to help librarians stay relevant. This was the perfect topic for me because it gave me practical tools I can use as I go through the job seeking process. Much of what was discussed was about honing our interpersonal skills, which I never imagined would matter, but it may just be the most important aspect of our profession. I truly appreciated the opportunity that NOCALL and the roundtable gave me to expand my mind and learn more about my craft.

I recently received my MLIS hood and had the pleasure of listening to Dr. Ken Haycock speak about what we new librarians need to do in order to obtain work and stay relevant. As with many discussions at the Spring Institute, Dr. Haycock focused on continuing education, networking, and commanding our interpersonal relations. I found myself nodding as he spoke because I realized that I had begun to do all three key components of becoming a successful librarian by attending the NOCALL event. We all have to start somewhere and I am thrilled that I attended the Spring Institute because it was an intimate setting more conducive to learning and networking than say one of the larger conferences would be.

Ultimately the key for us newbies is to not live in fear and to keep networking and learning, and trust that the seasoned law librarians are there to mentor and help us. So attend as many NOCALL events as possible, it was well worth it for me. And don’t forget those business cards!





## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The names of members who have joined NOCALL since publication of the 2010-11/2011-12 NO-CALL 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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## ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM AALL

### AALL2GO PICK OF THE MONTH

AALL's Continuing Professional Education Committee presents the AALL2go pick of the month: [Federal Regulatory Information and Where to Find It](#).

In this one-hour video, David Pritzker of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Regulatory Information Service Center provides a handy tutorial on the federal rulemaking process, including where the public can find access to federal regulations. The GSA Regulatory Information Center publishes a semiannual unified agenda on regulatory actions under development. The fall publication of the agenda includes a regulatory plan identifying current regulatory priorities and highlighting significant regulatory actions expected in the coming year. The center also helped establish Reginfo.gov to provide a "regulatory dashboard" of current information on the regulatory process, which includes handy FAQs on the regulatory process and hyperlinks to government sources for the regulations.

Pritzker's presentation explains the evolution of public access to regulatory information (including the genesis of the Code of Federal Regulations and Federal Register), how the Administrative Procedure Act creates a legal framework for the adoption of regulations in a manner allowing for public input, and where to find regulatory information, including new, free web-based government resources.

Find this and more than 80 other free continuing education programs and webinars for AALL members on [AALL2go!](#)

### UNRAVELING THE MYSTERIES OF THE LAW FIRM MARKETING DEPARTMENT

Third in a series of five programs moderated by the [Private Law Libraries Special Interest Section](#) (PLL-SIS), the recorded video, [Unraveling the Mysteries of the Law Firm Marketing Department](#), features the chief marketing officer and director of client relations from the law firm of Morrison & Foerster. Moderator Kathy Skinner also manages the research and intelligence department at Morrison & Foerster, which reports to the marketing department, making each of these three speakers uniquely qualified to discuss the role of the library within the larger organization.

This program is part of a two-year program undertaken by PLL-SIS with the goals of identifying significant changes taking place in the legal world, understanding how these changes provide opportunities for assuming leadership roles, and developing concrete plans for librarians to become leaders within their organizations. The culmination of these efforts, the Change as Action Summit, will take place at the AALL Annual Meeting in Philadelphia on Saturday, July 23.

### NEW AND IMPROVED AALLNET NOW LIVE

In May AALL launched the redesigned [AALLNET](#) where you'll discover a new layout, easy-to-use navigation, more features and functionality, and a stronger brand.

The new AALLNET will allow you to:

Easily navigate the site to browse for information or complete a specific task, such as register for an event or apply for a grant.

At a glance from the homepage, view the latest news, events, job postings, and AALL's Twitter feed.

Use the search box to find specific information; results can also be further refined or used to discover related resources.

Collaborate electronically with your special interest sections, caucuses, and committees and network with like-minded members by using our online network called My Communities.

Visit [AALLNET](#) today and explore the new resources available for you!

## NOCALL OFFICERS 2010 - 2011

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

For more details, see <http://www.nocall.org/calendar.html>