

# NOCALL News

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

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Jeremy Sullivan, DLA Piper

Colleagues, I just had occasion to re-read past president Delia Montesinos' first column in NOCALL News from a year ago. In it, Delia is at a loss to pinpoint how she actually became president of our chapter. For my part, I have always semi-jokingly thought that I'd hit this milestone - 'If I'm around long enough, at some point I'll just end up president.' And that is seemingly what happened.

I've been thinking a lot about milestones this past year – I turned 50 last August, my wife had a baby in October, my middle daughter became a high school freshman, and my oldest is in the gut-churning throes of filling out her college applications as I write this. These signposts are both joyous and tinged with bittersweet elements. And I know that there will be less happy moments on the horizon. My mother is in a transitional phase of her life. All of us have been affected by COVID in one way or another. Some of our members have lost dearly beloved partners, family and friends.

Meanwhile, there is work...and work is insane. There are a host of new ways to do our jobs quickly and efficiently, coupled with multiple indications that it is never quick enough. Remote work is both liberating and isolating. Information work is mentally taxing and can leave you completely spent at the end of the day, unable to decide what to make for dinner much less plan for tomorrow's workload. The state of the world is a constant distraction that can both inform and impede our work.

My point is, in thinking about these milestones and these stressors – it has finally struck home that we ALL face them. We are all struggling. We are all thinking about our mental well-being, the work-life balance, the shape of things to come to the point of distraction and near-meltdown. And the only saving grace is kindness. We are fortunate to be a profession filled with kind people – librarians who have service to others as their core mission, who always seem to have that little bit of extra support for their colleagues at other firms and corporations, colleges and universities, courthouses and government agencies.

As president, I am focused on welcoming the next generation of members into the fold, and it occurs to me that when we talk about what it means to work in this profession and be a part of this chapter, we often talk about how wonderful and supportive our colleagues are. In a time when all of us are searching for just the tiniest bit of kindness, I can think of no better selling point. So, thank you all for your grace, your skill, your energy, your dedication, and above all – your kindness.



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## HEADNOTES FROM HOLLY

Holly Riccio

**ART IMITATES LIFE...** I had the opportunity to attend the opening reception for the 40th Annual Course of the International Association of Law Libraries at Stanford. The opening reception was held on the North Lawn of the Cantor Art Museum, and attendees were able to spend time wandering through the museum as part of the event. The exhibit that struck me most of all was one titled [The Melancholy Museum: Love, Death, and Mourning at Stanford](#). (I said to the law librarian I was walking with, “Well, this is right up my alley.”) The exhibition is made up of 700+ items representing how Leland Stanford Jr.’s death at 15 led to the creation of both the museum and the university. His personality shines through in his quirky and curious collection of items and reminded me of the collection of things Lee Anne left for me. I could certainly curate my own personal melancholy museum with her objects, minus the taxidermy.

**MORE THAN WAYBACK...** I also had the opportunity to attend the IALL keynote, given by Corynne McSherry, Legal Director at the Electronic Frontier Foundation. After saying how much she enjoys talking to librarians, she spent her talk focused on the [Hachette v. Internet Archive](#) case she is working on. While so many of us—and our patrons and users—know and use the Internet Archive for the Wayback Machine capabilities, they are also a nonprofit digital lending library using Controlled Digital Lending (CDL) to loan digital copies of books they own in print. The case, pending in U.S. District Court (SDNY), was just fully briefed, so now we all wait to see what the outcome is, as it will have huge impacts on libraries and the future of digital lending.

**TERRIBLE, THANKS FOR ASKING...** I went to see a live version of the [TTFA podcast](#) and enjoyed a communal evening with others that had either experienced powerful trauma or loss, or just appreciated the open discussion and exploration of grief and suffering. One of the things that really struck me that podcaster Nora McInerney shared was a saying or mantra she lives by: “It’s going to be OK.” The phrase purposely starts with it’s and not I’m—since they are two very different things. What really struck me was how, depending on how much of the saying you read, it represents different things, different stages of where one might be on any given day or at any given moment. Sometimes, you might feel like “It’s going.” Other days, you might be able to see that “It’s going to be.” And, on those really good days, the entire phrase applies, and it really feels like it’s going to be OK.

## PROFESSIONAL READING IN REVIEW

Elisabeth McKechnie and Kristin Brandt,  
U.C. Davis Law Library

**“Why Students Are Skipping Class So Often, and How to Bring Them Back,”** by Carol E. Holstead, *The Chronicle for Higher Education*, September 1, 2022. Available at: <https://www.chronicle.com/article/why-students-are-skipping-class-so-often-and-how-to-bring-them-back>.

Since classes have resumed in person, college educators have noticed high levels of student disconnection and significant drops in attendance. The author surveyed her 245 students to find out why they were skipping class. About 37% of respondents reported that they

## NOCALL News

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did not regularly attend class. The reasons ranged from family issues and dealing with depression to boring teachers and difficulty adapting to in-person classes post-Covid. What prompted students to go to class? Many students attended because of required-attendance policies. Students were also more likely to come to class when they felt a sense of belonging and connection to the instructor and their classmates. Finally, students attended when course materials, such as quizzes and recorded lectures, were not available online. The author suggests that educators may have to reestablish guardrails and dial back some of the changes made during Covid to convince students to venture back to class.

**“Crunching the Numbers, What to do with the release of the 2020 Census data,”** by Frank Donnelly, *American Libraries Magazine: Dispatches*, June 1, 2022. Available at: <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/authors/frank-donnelly/>

In this short article, Donnelly gives a brief synopsis of the 2020 Census data that will be released over the course of 2022. He gives web locations for free public access directly from the Census Bureau but also references other sources of access from free to fee-based. The article ends with a link to the seven-chaptered technical report he has recently published. The report is on sale at [bit.ly/ALA-LTR](https://bit.ly/ALA-LTR)

**“US Census Data: Concepts and Applications for Supporting Research,”** by Frank Donnelly, *Library Technology Reports* Vol. 58, No. 4, May/June 2022. This seven-chapter paper goes into how the Census data is collected and how it can be used. The detail is excruciating and recommended for someone already familiar with census. It will most benefit anyone with a background in statistics and coding (see Chapter 5: Accessing Data). Needless to say, U.S. Census data is gold and is mostly used in the form of predigested reports, which tend to be less detailed than the user might prefer. Use this paper to sharpen your understanding of the concepts under which data is organized (Chapter 3: Census Concepts). Chapter 7: The Census in Library Applications will help you actively use Census to help you site your new library according to neighborhood demographics. Heavy going but a valuable summary.

**“A Librarian’s Guide to Election Law Resources,”** by Anthony Aycok, *Information Today*, Vol. 39, No. 6, p. 12, July/August 2022.

Election law has dominated the news since the disputed presidential election of 2020. This has given rise to many reference questions related to both presidential and local elections, including one now pending in November 2022. This short article provides links to news related to the 2020 election as well as websites generally considered authoritative like Ballotpedia (neutral) to left-leaning Brennan Center for Justice, and to sources for case summaries with in-depth explainers, blogs from election law experts and references to books and videos. Surprisingly, one of the leading works on U.S. election law is in the Nutshell series of student study aids: “Election Law in a Nutshell” by Daniel Tokaji at University of Wisconsin School of Law. Aycok’s work is pithy and an easy read for the librarian.

**“Using NAICS Codes Effectively to Research Industries,”** by Jennifer C. Boettcher, *Online Searcher*, Vol 46, Issue 5, pp.10-15, Sept/Oct 2022.

**“Changes to NAICS Affect Researchers,”** by Jennifer C. Boettcher, *Online Searcher*, Vol. 46, Issue 4, pp. 16-21, Jul/Aug 2022

NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) codes are an important tool for business research. Many databases use NAICS codes as thesaurus terms and searchable fields. In these companion articles, Boettcher explains intricacies of the code creation, research issues, and recent changes to the classification system. The system was created by the Office of Management and Budget to normalize data collection by federal statistical agencies. However, assignment of codes is not standardized. Businesses self-assign their own codes, but so do regulators, who each use their own definitions. The author details major changes in 2022 and includes citations to helpful source documents.

## LEGAL TECH RECAP

### Kristie Chamorro, UC Berkeley Law Library

It's hard to believe that we are well into the fall, with many of us welcoming new law students and attorneys. A highlight of my summer was attending AALL and engaging in person with tech vendors from around the country. The Cool Tools 2022 session featured a range of innovative legal tech resources. If you missed it, the AALL Legal Innovation & Technology SIS has been spotlighting some of the demoed tools in their [blog](#).

Here are highlights from legal tech news and releases over the last few months. As always, if you come across a new legal tech tool that you would like to see featured here, please let me know!

#### **Bloomberg Law**

This month, Bloomberg Law [added](#) a new Health Industry ESG Toolkit that provides practical guidance around ESG (environmental, social, governance) issues in the health care sector. Their September updates include a new In Focus: Abortion Law page and an accompanying Practical Guidance: Abortion Law Toolkit.

For a full update of the summer Bloomberg Law updates and news, take a look at the [July 5 CRIV Blog](#) covering the CRIV/Bloomberg Law Liaison meeting.

#### **Courtroom Insight**

[Courtroom Insight announced](#) a collaboration with [LexisNexis Legal & Professional](#) that will allow mutual customers to access select Lexis data about expert witnesses and judges within the Courtroom Insight platform. In the [August 23 Dewey B Strategic post](#), Jean O'Grady talks with representatives from both LexisNexis and Courtroom Insight about the collaboration.

#### **Docket Alarm by Fastcase**

In August, [Docket Alarm](#) released the [Motions in Federal Courts](#) business intelligence tool. Docket Alarm [explained](#) that it "empowers lawyers to micro-target specific types of motions and create customized analytics" using the technology of [Judicata](#), which categorizes millions of motions by type, stage, nature of suit, law firm, judge, and more. Bob Ambrogi [reviewed](#) the unique tool, describing it as a "potentially powerful tool for anyone involved in federal court litigation."

#### **HeinOnline**

HeinOnline made a splash in September with the release of its newest database: [Water Rights and Resources](#).

#### **Information Legal Technology Association**

The Information Legal Technology Association (ILTA)'s annual convention, [ILTACON](#), was held in August and generated quite a bit of coverage. The [September 28 Geek in Review podcast](#) featured Martha Breil, the 2022 ILTACON Co-Chair, who gave an interesting rundown on the event. Abrogi [posted](#) the five legal tech themes he took away from the conference and O'Grady [praised](#) a conference panel for its "intensely passionate" presentation on the history of AI.

#### **LexisNexis**

In August, [LexisNexis Legal & Professional](#) and the [LexisNexis Rule of Law Foundation](#) announced the launch of the LexisNexis U.S. [Voting Laws & Legislation Center](#). This free tool provides access to a curated and expanding collection of more than 20,000 U.S. federal and state election laws and over 2,000 proposed bills, with customizable research content and interactive data visualizations.

#### **Map Engine**

[Map Engine](#) recently released new maps and updates that allow firms to easily map multijurisdictional legal data. Ambrogi [reported](#) on the release in August, explaining that the new features "allows users to create a visualization that bundles more than one map together to tell a broader story than a single map can do."

#### **Microsoft**

A recent [How-To-Geek post](#) explains why the [Windows 11's 2022 update](#) (AKA 22H2) is worth the upgrade, and reviews handy new features, including an improved start menu and the return of drag and drop between the taskbar and other program/folders.

#### **Thomson Reuters**

The big news from Thomson Reuters is the release of [Westlaw Precision](#), a major upgrade to Westlaw Edge that promises to dramatically improve research results and cut research time. There are a slew of posts covering the launch and new features. The September CRIV post, [Have You Seen the New Westlaw?](#), provides a great round up of the posts.

## **Trellis**

On September 30, [Trellis announced](#) new coverage of state trial courts in Michigan, Missouri, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin.

## **Wolters Kluwer**

On October 3, [Wolters Kluwer Legal & Regulatory U.S.](#) launched Labor and Arbitrator Awards Analyzer (accessible from the Labor Arbitration section on Vital Law). O'Grady [explains](#) that it is a powerful "research and data visualization tool which delivers key insights on labor arbitrators and labor arbitration awards, trends, and outcomes." Abroggi [described it](#) as a "major step" towards remedying the lack of information on private arbitrators, particularly in labor and employment matters.

In September, WK Legal & Regulatory also released an enhanced version of [Legisway](#), a workflow tool for corporate legal departments. Both [Ambroggi](#) and [O'Grady](#) covered the release.

## **WordRake**

[WordRake](#) released the new version of its legal editing software, which includes a new "Simplicity" editing mode for simplifying complex language. Ambroggi [covered](#) the expanded functionality of the new version and also published [a hands-on review](#).

## **vLex**

In September, [vLex](#) and [Free Law Project](#) [announced](#) a collaboration to promote greater access to justice. vLex will provide Free Law with technical, financial, and research support for the building of a complete database of opinions from U.S. federal and state courts. The free cases will be available through Free Law Project's [CourtListener](#) website. For details on the new partnership, check out the [September 12 Law Sites post](#).

## **Things You Should Check Out**

### **Tango**

[Tango](#) is a popular new Chrome extension for quickly creating "how-to" guides. I am already a huge fan! For more information, check out the recent CRIV post, [Trying Tango for Short Web-Based Training Tutorials](#).

[Workflow](#) is another new tool that I've recently been hearing about as a simple, but powerful, organization/mind-mapping app. Shay Elbaum, Faculty Research Librarian at the University of

Michigan Law Library, explains how he uses it in a [Cool Tools 2022 Spotlight](#) post.

For those of you who are interested in a detailed report on recent trends in legal tech, the ABA Center for Innovation released its inaugural [Innovation Trends Report](#) in August.

# Zach Kerns

Cooley, LLP

## *How did you choose law librarianship as a career?*

I was in my late thirties working in construction and starting my own house-painting business when I first became interested in librarianship. Even though I enjoyed painting, and the construction industry, I realized that my financial future was not entirely secure, and my physical well-being was not at all assured - and that made retirement financial security even less secure. If I wanted to retire from that career with a decent savings, it would be necessary to have a crew of workers under me doing much of the work while I was taking care of the business aspect of the profession. That would mean stepping back from the part of the profession that I most enjoyed - creating structures and customizing finishes. Additionally, I recognized that, since the work itself is very hard on the body, even if I were to retire with a comfortable financial cushion, I would likely not have a sound physical structure to support me in the activities I enjoy. My mother mentioned libraries, pointing out that I had grown up a real bookworm, going to libraries and bookstores sometimes multiple times a week. As a youngster, I enjoyed the superficial structures of libraries. (I had the fortune of growing up on Long Island, NY, and there were many public libraries that had been formed in donated houses, and the buildings themselves were always interesting.) Then in high school I started to do research projects and learned the value of the people who worked in libraries. I have been a member of the library of whatever community I've lived in for my entire life. Every wallet I have had has contained a library card. When my mother noted my lasting interest in libraries, it was the first time I thought of this as an actual career, and I looked at San Jose State's program. As fortune would have it, they were offering an Open University opportunity in their SLIS program. (People could take a semester in a program without having to make a formal application to the school.) This was perfect for a person dabbling in a new area. During that semester, I was painting a house and had an accident which required an operation to replace a ligament in my knee - I could not work for several months. This was the quintessential "here's your sign" moment. I was enjoying the introductory class in the SLIS program, and at the end of the Open University term, I applied for admission to the Master's program, and 22 years later, I am writing this mini-essay.

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

I have always enjoyed the camaraderie of NOCALL, and the ability to reach out to the community for assistance when my particular collection does not contain a resource one of my patrons needs. The ability to ask for help without judgment and without the underlying "you owe me" response is rare in the construction industry, and other professions I've worked in. I value that good-will attitude - it encourages cooperation in many ways other than simply retrieving an article for another librarian/researcher who does not have a resource I might have. Also, the personality range we see in the profession in general, but in NOCALL in particular, is so darned interesting. From our backgrounds to our outside interests, we are a very curious set of people, and I love that about us.

## *What's the best advice you've ever received working as a librarian?*

The best advice I have received, and this came from professors and bosses alike, was never explicit, but always implied. All the people I have worked for and learned from, and whom I

have most appreciated, have set the example that all our patrons/customers need assistance in some way. There have been, will be, situations where some requests are frustrating or (to me) self-explanatory, but the person making the request believes they need – maybe more than they may truly require - so just help them. To answer their call for help is the job I have accepted, and it won't cost me anything to assist them.

The best advice I got from another profession was from a painting boss: "Get out of the corner." There were a couple of times when our crew was working on high-end jobs with multiple colors. When two colors meet – usually in a corner of a room where two walls, or a ceiling and a wall, or a trim piece and a wall join – and it can sometime be difficult to create a perfect line between the two colors. A couple times I found myself trying to create that perfect line, and I would hear my boss's voice over my shoulder, "Zach! Get out of the corner!" He weighted quality strongly in his work, but he also had a very practical view of what the customer could see. Whenever the "get out of the corner" command came out, I knew that I was perseverating over something that, in the long run, would not matter in a substantive way. I still use that phrase on myself in some research projects when I start to perceive I am spinning my wheels in a particular facet of the research.

#### ***What is your favorite legal book and why?***

I think my favorite book – a series, really – is a practice guide. The Matthew Bender "Forms of Pleading and Practice" was extraordinarily helpful to me in my first full-time, permanent, position - the Santa Cruz County Law Library - out of library school. I did not know much about the law in any meaningful way. The patrons were also fairly ignorant about the subject as well, but they usually (usually...) needed only basic information about how to proceed with their cases in a step-by-step way. The Forms of Pleading and Practice were very helpful to them for the formulation of their matters. For me, the additional information concerning the statutory and case history basis of why this is all necessary was very helpful in informing my understanding of the law in general. I still sometimes use practice guides (as appropriate) in starting research projects with our Summer Associates and First Year Associates.

#### ***What was the last book you read that you really enjoyed and why?***

The most recent enjoyable book I read was a surprise. "Index, A History of the Bookish Adventure from Medieval Manuscripts to the Digital Age", by Dennis Duncan. An attorney asked me to find the proceedings of a conference on indexing that the author had organized in Oxford, England. Given the information I had to proceed on, it was difficult to find the proceedings and, in the course of my research, I contacted Mr. Duncan directly. Given our respective time zones, I was not hopeful for a quick response, but received one immediately at what would have been past 11:00 pm for Mr. Duncan. He was incredibly helpful and sent to me a complete copy of the entire conference proceedings that night. During our conversation it came out that he had written a book that was soon to be published and I had to buy it. How could I not? When I received it, I prepared myself for a dry treatment of a very academic subject, but it was very informative, at times had a humorous treatment without reducing the subject. Overall, I was glad to have made the purchase and I recommend it.

#### ***How (or which) books influenced your childhood?***

1. "Swiss Family Robinson", by Johann David Wyss. I disliked it. It was boring. I found reading it to be a chore, I couldn't believe any of it, and I felt insulted by the way it was written. The lesson for me in this book was that I did not need to continue doing something I found unappealing, and that not all books are interesting or worth reading.
2. "The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet", by Eleanor Cameron. My first experience with Science-Fiction. To my experience it was bizarre, captivating, and wonderful. The theme of inherent reward in the pursuit of curiosity and perseverance, and acceptance of the unusual was perfect for me at the time.
3. The "The Three Investigators" series, by Robert Arthur Jr. These books embodied several "I wish" thoughts at that age: 'I wish I had a patron who would give me the resources to do whatever I want to do.' ; 'I wish I could be unusual in a way that others could appreciate.' ; 'I want to live in scrap yard where I have all the resources I need to build a hideout with escape tunnels.' ; and, 'Wouldn't it be great to be an investigator!?' I suppose, in a way, I have found a profession that satisfies elements of all these books.

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