

RIVER CITY REVIEW

Association of Legal Administrators

Sacramento Valley Chapter Newsletter

Winter—2011

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Send Newsletter feedback to:

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Jessica Miller, MBA
President, SVALA



Jessica Miller, MBA
Sweeney & Greene
LLP

Well, another year is wrapping up and we're getting ready to celebrate with our friends and family near and far. 'Tis the season where the scents of pine and crackling fires fill the air, we sometimes have to navigate pea soup fog to make it to work, and we're glad we don't have to shovel snow in the morning and evening, well, really, ever. (If you have to shovel because you have a cabin that so doesn't count.) It's the small things...

We had a fantastic Holiday Season celebration party this month at the Esquire Grill and we were able to give this year's charity, St. John's Shelter Program for Women and Children, a check for over \$1,000, plus a pile of unwrapped Christmas gifts for all of the children currently in residence. If you missed the party it's not too late to donate – St. John's has a local warehouse that accepts small appliances, furniture, clothing, household goods, etc. And, if you donate between now and December 31st you can take the tax deduction this year! Check this deserving organization out on the web at <http://www.stjohnsshelter.org/> for a description of their mission and their current wish list.

Speaking of the party – a great, big thank you goes out to Michele Tracy, Laura Williams, Kathy Davidson-Brown, and Sylvia Warner for organizing the event, providing business partner opportunities, and for coordinating our giving to St. John's. Job well done. Please know that we very much appreciate all of your stellar efforts, as always.

Reminder – it's still not too late to register for the Annual Conference in Honolulu taking place April 22 – 26, 2012 at the Hawaiian Convention Center in the Hilton Hawaiian Village! There is still a discount on registration (\$795 instead of \$995) if you register by February 6, 2012, and airfare is really cheap right now, so time's a wastin'.... Visit the ALA website at <http://www.alanet.org/conf/2012/default.html> for more information and to download the "justification toolkit."

That's it for now. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to everyone – stay safe and warm and we'll see you in the New Year!

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SPOTLIGHT ON SIERRA OFFICE SUPPLY & PRINTING

Please visit page 5 for this edition's Business Partner Spotlight.

We appreciate each and every one of our sponsors.
Thank you for your partnership and support of the SVALA.

LETTER FROM YOUR EDITOR



Vicki A. Robinson, PHR-CA
Olson, Hagel & Fishburn, LLP

Well, my favorite holiday has come and gone, no not my birthday, Thanksgiving. My favorite part of the holiday is cooking and spending time with my family and friends. I also make several trips to the dessert table. That's right, I go for the good stuff. The turkey and all the trimmings are okay, but bring on the peach cobbler, sweet potato pie, pumpkin pie, pineapple cake, chocolate cake, okay enough, I'm getting hungry. I'm sure you get the picture. Dessert tastes better during the holidays. I hope everyone enjoyed their Thanksgiving holiday.

Now we are on count down for gift giving. I'm so grateful that our chapter encourages members to give back to the community. Please read the article submitted by Joelle Stone on the Community Challenge Weekend held in November. Additionally, the chapter collected gifts and cash donations for St. John's Shelter for Women and Children for the holidays. The gifts and cash donations were presented to the St. John representative at our Holiday luncheon.

Thanks to the committee for their dedication and hard work on the luncheon, it was absolutely fantastic.

Please be sure to read the article in this edition entitled "Revisiting The Year-End Evaluations." We want to acknowledge our Business Partners for their continued support of SVALA.

Happy Holidays!!!

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BUSINESS PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

SIERRA OFFICE SUPPLY & PRINTING

Editor: Thank you for being a Business Partner of the Sacramento Valley Legal Administrators Association. Please tell us why you chose to support our organization.

Suzie & Kim: Over the past several years, each of us had been approached by administrators of firms that are our current customers about becoming a sponsor for the SVALA. We felt our single source approach and local presence would be a good fit and we have been delighted to participate since 2005.

Editor: Tell us about Sierra Office Supply & Printing and the services you provide.

Suzie & Kim: Established in 1981, we are a progressive local company. In addition to being the largest independent office supplier in Northern California, we are also one of the largest onsite commercial print shops in Sacramento. What makes us unique from other vendors is that we can provide a wide range of products and services which also includes duplicating and high speed copying, mailing services, graphic design, promotional products and apparel, furniture, stamps & signage and office machine service and sales.

Editor: Give us a little background about yourselves. How long have you been in the business? How long have you been with Sierra Office Supply & Printing?

Suzie: I began my sales and marketing career in the early 1980's working for San Sierra Business Systems selling the first thermal fax machines on the market. I then went on to work for several copier, fax and supply dealers and happily landed at Sierra in 2000.

Kim: For the past 28 years I have worked in many capacities in this industry. Early on I worked for a manufacturer "The Chicago Desk Pad Company" now referred to as C-Line products as an inside sales representative. Over the years I continued to gain experience working for a few local suppliers in customer service and outside sales and was excited to join the sales team at Sierra in 2000.

Editor: How is it different working with law firms than other non-legal businesses?

Suzie & Kim: Law firms are unique in that they seem to prefer to work with local vendors and utilize the variety of custom services that we offer. We have the ability to work closely with both the administrators and their staff in developing strategic procurement solutions which greatly benefit their bottom line.

Editor: Tell us how you would describe your working style. What makes you successful at what you do?

Suzie: Authentic, energetic and responsive. My number one priority has always been my customer.

Kim: Listen and learn. I like to provide a good solution to all my customers needs and be the one they think of for office resources. I am responsive and pride myself on my integrity and passion.

Editor: Tell us something fun each of you enjoy doing outside of work.

Suzie: One of my biggest passions is working in my perennial and vegetable garden which could take up the entire weekend if I let it. I also enjoy antique shopping, dining with friends, reading a good book and taking long walks at the UCD Arboretum.

Kim: My biggest joy is spending as much time with my 12 year old daughter as possible. We have been able to learn many things together and are enjoying the journey. We like to kayak on Lake Tahoe and play with our many adopted furry friends which include a dog, 2 birds, a cat and a bunny. I also enjoy home projects, cooking and trying new things as much as possible.

Editor: What do you want the SVALA members to know about you and Sierra Office Supply & Printing?

Suzie & Kim: We have done our homework in researching the many needs of the law firm environment and are dedicated to providing excellent customer service and custom solutions. We have had a winning response from the SVALA members. We look forward to continuing our sponsorship in the years to come and sincerely appreciate your business!

REGION 6 CONFERENCE



**Cindy Snook , PHR
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Viva Las Vegas!! I must admit that the Region 6 Conference held in Las Vegas this year was one of the best regional conferences I have attended in a long time. This was the first time that I have been on the Conference Planning committee and I now have a new appreciation for the time, dedication and effort it takes to coordinate a conference of this magnitude. Over 260 members attended the conference and that is a record number for this event.

The Cosmopolitan Hotel was a fabulous venue, a top choice destination and the newest hotel on the Las Vegas strip. This year our committee created a session in series track called "The Strategic Mind" and a host of educational courses within that track. It was well received by the audience and the evaluations we received suggested that we repeat this again next year.

In representing ALA as your Regional Projects Officer, I found myself spending the majority of my time in the Exhibits Hall with our business partners. The exhibit hall was a great success and I want to personally thank everyone who attended for showing their support and spending time with our business partners who exhibited at our conference. The feedback I received from all of the business partners was quite impressive.

The opening speaker, Dennis Snow, educated the audience with developing a service of excellence strategy within our law firms. One of the important notes that I walked away with at this presentation was that it is important to establish accountability processes that ensure that service excellence is non-negotiable in all our offices. It seems like a simple idea that could elevate your law firms above the others. He presented us with several ideas on how to implement these goals within our firms.

My favorite session was "Romancing the Room: Presentations that Make Your Point" presented by attorney James Wagstaffe. His advice on how to make a positive first impression was invaluable to all of the legal administrators in attendance. The only thing that could have made his presentation better was to have had more time and a bigger room as it was really packed in there.

I am looking forward to working on the next Regional Conference in Anaheim. I hope we have an excellent turnout again.



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REVISITING THE YEAR-END EVALUATIONS

By Doreen Marino

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If your evaluation process has become a monotonous necessity to justify salary increases, you are not alone. The evaluation process has matured and, in many ways, evolved to a systematic procedure to support increases in compensation. For the most part, the process has developed into the time of year when poor performers receive discipline and good employees have been told that they are good employees (and we have nothing else to tell them except that they should continue to be good employees). Unfortunately, most of us report that we have too much on our plate and good employees are looked over because, after all, we need to concentrate on the poor performers.

The evaluation process was actually intended to be a DEVELOPMENTAL tool, not a DISCIPLINARY tool. Many firms have lost perspective of the intent of the evaluation process. If you are one of them, I am going to share with you some pitfalls and ways to work around them to ensure that your evaluation process is doing what it intends to do — develop your employees.

THE EVALUATION FORMS — WHAT SHOULD BE IN THEM?

Review your evaluation forms and make sure they are specifically on target to the criteria that is required for the employees' success in the firm. In other words, make sure the evaluation form does not contain questions that are not related to the development of employees' success. Every question should be applicable to every person holding the same position. In instances of attorney evaluations, as the attorneys are maturing in their years of experience, so should the evaluation forms, since there are different criteria for a fifth-year associate versus a first-year associate. For the larger firms, there is a large amount of software solutions to the evaluation process and most of them are customizable to meet your particular firm's strategic goals and performance desires. Review your evaluation forms each year to ensure that the questions presented cannot generate answers that

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(Continued)

are discriminatory. All evaluations should have the end result of giving you a fair and accurate measure of comparing different individuals in the same position at the same level.

COMMON PROBLEMS WITH THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROCESS

1. Missing Written Evaluations. If you frequently lack feedback from the evaluators, make the process a little easier. Most evaluation forms should be designed as a question followed by a series of possible responses. The evaluator is asked to check the appropriate response. Evaluation forms additionally have been developed to provide for the evaluator's commentary. The reason for requesting commentary is to put perspective on why the evaluator chose the response that he/she chose. For example, if the evaluator selects "excellent, goes above and beyond, etc." and provides the commentary "gets me Starbucks coffee every morning," then you can put the rating into perspective. However, cleaning up evaluation forms (to make them legally compliant) has become an inundating task, causing the entire evaluation process to be a groaning process for administrators and human resources alike. The way around this is to develop questions and provide a detailed choice of answers. You can develop the follow-up questions as well to get the proper perspective of the evaluator. This can be very time consuming to create, but a large time-saver in the long-run. Removing the option to provide commentary does save a tremendous amount of clean-up work — making the evaluation process easier to implement. There are plenty of software packages that can assist in the generation of evaluation forms. For those with a bigger budget, the evaluation forms can actually be done on screen, making the process for the evaluator easier and quicker.

Also, invite self-evaluations. Self-evaluations serve a few functions: (1) it provides a very good perspective of what the employee believes his/her strengths are, (2) it gives a clear understanding of the communication that is transpiring between superiors and subordinates; and (3) if you provide an evaluation form for self-evaluations, it gives the employee the criteria on which he/she is being evaluated. For example, an attorney filling in a self-evaluation stating that he/she has very strong writing skills, while you are looking at evaluations submitted by partners indicating that the writing skills are very weak, gives you a good indication that there is a communication problem.

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2. Not Conducting Evaluation Conferences. Many firms rely on the written evaluations only. This is contradictory to the purpose and intent of the evaluation process and, in fact, frustrates employees. The evaluation conference provides the avenue for employees to develop. At a minimum, holding a conference tells the employee that the firm thinks they are important enough to invest in time for them.

3. Talking Money During the Evaluation Conferences. This is probably one of the tougher clarifications that need to be made. Discussions about compensation, including proposed raises, should not be discussed during an evaluation conference. The problem is that there is too much focus on the salary and not enough on the development. For the most part, most firms follow this guideline with attorney evaluations. It is frequently the staff evaluation conferences that are misguided. Do the evaluation conference in advance of raise considerations. Not

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(Continued)

only will the conference focus on development, the employees will then feel like they have an input into their performance as well.

4. New Employees. Everyone knows that new employees need relatively quick feedback. If our goal is to develop the employees, then they should not be waiting a year, or even longer, to get an evaluation. There should be in place a new employee evaluation process. A minimum period of three months and a maximum of six months is recommended. Both the employee and the firm need this follow-up. Not only can you make sure the employee is on the right performance path, but giving the employee a chance to talk about their recommendations at this stage can be very useful to the firm and support retention efforts.
5. Employees with Consistently Good Evaluations. Many employers do not give everyone an evaluation conference because they feel there is nothing to say. The evaluations and the conferences are just repeats, year after year. This can actually be very detrimental to your best performers. Good employees need to hear that they are good. They like to hear what it is they are doing that you consider valuable. The key here is to be specific — refer to specific events throughout the year. For example, it was really outstanding when you took on this project and stuck with it even though it probably was a lot more than you were originally thinking, etc. Managers use different methods to track this information. The simplest approach is to keep a separate alphabetical file on employees to throw in notes throughout the year and just review the file at the time the evaluations are written.
6. Employees Who Never Improve. This happens a little too often. Year after year we have the same “improvements needed” on an evaluation form and the employee never cures the problem. Use the evaluation conference as an avenue for the employee to come up with ways to fix the problems. Revisit the situation with the full anticipation that the problem will be solved. If you can’t come to a solution, tell the employee to find the appropriate seminar on it and have the firm pay for that seminar. In other words, make sure the expectation is that we want to actively resolve the problem. For example, with attorneys common problems include time management, public speaking, client communication, etc.; for staff it can be maintaining the filing, proofreading, increasing productivity, etc.
7. Not Having the Evaluation Form Signed. An evaluation form in an employee’s file is practically worthless if it is not signed off by the employee. This is even more prevalent if you personally are not conducting the evaluation conference, as may happen with all attorneys. If I had a dollar for every employee who said “no one ever told me that” I would be ... well, you know. Never, ever assume that what is in an evaluation has been communicated to the employee. Employees cannot develop and fix things if they do not know what to work on. The only way to ensure proper communication during the evaluation process is to have the employee sign off on the evaluation form. Employees actually appreciate knowing what the expectations of performance are and how they are performing. Employees also appreciate knowing what is on the form that goes in their files. The unknown causes much more harm and misunderstandings.

Pop Quiz Winner from the last edition:

Cindy Harris

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REVISITING THE YEAR-END EVALUATIONS

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(Continued)

HELPFUL HINTS ABOUT CONDUCTING THE EVALUATION CONFERENCE

1. Whether the conference is for an attorney, management or support staff, you need to know to prepare, prepare, prepare. Do not wing it ... employees know this and feel that you have not taken them seriously enough to care to prepare.
2. Make it personal. Make sure you focus on that employee. It is all about them!
3. Make sure you are focusing on the past year of performance, not just the last couple of months.
4. Focus on making good things better. Get the employee's opinion in the conference. Always ask the employee how he/she would solve a problem that is at issue. For example, "*How do you think we can remember to calendar that information so we don't miss a deadline?*"
5. Conferences should last a minimum of a half hour — so if you are wrapping it up in five or ten minutes, you missed the point. If you do this once a year, it is even worse. If your conferences are typically short, use it as an opportunity to do an employee survey. For example, "*What do you think is the best benefit the firm offers?*"

If you walk away with something, walk away with the knowledge that the evaluation process on all levels becomes very stagnant rather quickly. Remember that, although evaluation forms provide you with the status of the developing employee, it is only half the journey. The evaluation conference and the ability to provide guidance to employees on how they are doing and what they can do to be better is critical in your firm's development.

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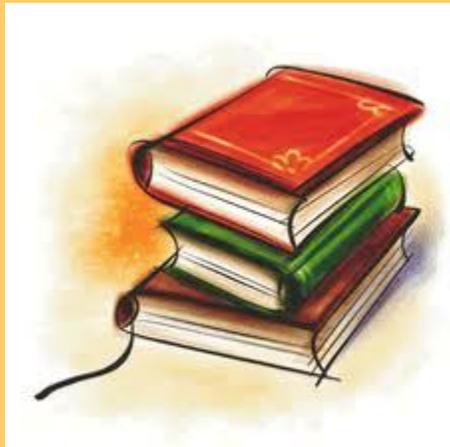
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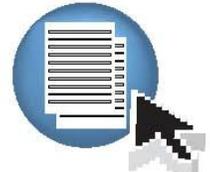
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Winter 2011-2012: February 15, 2012

All submissions must be provided via e-mail in Microsoft Word, Microsoft Publisher, pdf, jpg, or tif format. Please submit all materials to the Newsletter Chair:

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Thank you for your contributions!!

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The Role of Legal Administrators in
Legal Project Management – Unprecedented
Opportunities & Current Challenges (LI)*

May 16, 2012

Safe Stress! (CM)*

June 20, 2012

Technology Management:
The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (IT)**

July 18, 2012

Change Leadership: A Boot Camp to
Drive Organizational Change (OD)**

August 15, 2012

Records Management:
The Bermuda Triangle (LI)*

September 19, 2012

Of Foxes, Hedgehogs and
Law Firm Profitability (FM)*

October 17, 2012

Marketing on a Shoestring Budget (LI)*

November 14, 2012

(2nd week of November)
Dealing with Substance Abuse
in the Workplace (HR)*

* 60 minutes

** 120 minutes

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UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL INVITATION

Golden Gate Chapter Educational Conference and Exposition

By Steven Morris, CLM

On Thursday, February 2, the Golden Gate Chapter will host a one-day *2012 Knowledge to Leadership Educational Conference and Exposition*. We invite you to attend as there is so much to offer.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Mary O'Neil will open the conference with her keynote message on *Making Change Work for You: Cultivating Optimism and Enthusiasm in Challenging Times*. Mary has a Master's degree in Health Education and Counseling Psychology from John F. Kennedy University. She is a nationally known speaker, trainer, and executive coach. Sean Carter will make us laugh during lunch. Sean is a graduate of Harvard Law School and practiced corporate law for a decade before becoming America's foremost (actually, ONLY) Humorist at Law. Eileen McDargh will close our conference with *Radical Resiliency*. Eileen is an internationally recognized keynote speaker, master facilitator, and award-winning author. **Executive Excellence** consistently ranks her among the top 50 leadership thought leaders.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Attendees can choose from six breakout sessions on timely topics: Creating Successful Presentations, Leaves of Absence, Alternative Fee Arrangements, Stress Management, Diversity and Inclusion, and Preventing Employment Liability in the Expanding Blogosphere. Presenters include Walter Stella, Partner at Bingham, Matthew Laws, Partner at Reed Smith, and Marie Kenny, Partner at Luce Forward. All educational sessions qualify for CLM credit. HRCI and MCLE credit is pending.

EXHIBIT HALL

In between educational sessions, take time to explore the Exhibit Hall. Your ability to manage an efficient and prosperous law firm or corporate law office will be enhanced with the cutting-edge products, services, supplies, and technology displayed by our business partners. Here is the partial list of exhibitors: ABA Retirement Funds, Adams & Martin Group, Ahern Insurance, City National Bank, DataSafe, Document Technologies, Inc., EC Purchasing, Element Professional Staffing, First Legal Network, Intivix, Iron Mountain, Kaplan & Partners, Kearney Boyle & Associates, Inc., Nationwide Legal, Nelson Legal, Pacific Office Automation, Pathways Personnel, Inc., Robert Half Legal, Swiss Post Solutions, and Turner Construction Company. If your favorite business partner isn't mentioned, tell them you will be attending and want to see them participate. They can contact Anne Reed for exhibitor information.

REGISTRATION INCLUSIONS

As fellow ALA members, the registration fee is \$150 which includes timely education, continental breakfast, lunch, coffee breaks, and a cocktail reception. The historic Palace Hotel is a perfect setting for networking with your colleagues. Brochure and registration forms were mailed in mid-December. More information and online registration can be found at www.alasf.org/2012conf. Thank you for marking your calendar today to attend this conference.

PREVIOUS EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL EVENTS

October 18, 2011

The Administrator's Role in Workplace Investigations: Common Pitfalls and Management Strategies



Deborah Maddux Allison
Van Dermeyden Allison Law Corporation

Speaker

Deborah Maddux Allison

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Deborah Maddux Allison specializes in employment law and human resources management. Deborah is a licensed California attorney, a certified Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR), and a certified EEOC investigator.

Drawing upon her extensive background, which includes experience as a litigator, advisor to a State Commission, in-house counsel, and now owner and manager of her own firm, Deborah has provided employment law services throughout California for nearly two decades.

Deborah specializes in conducting investigations into claims of workplace misconduct, often involving complex facts, multiple claims, and politically-sensitive issues. She has provided legal advice in all aspects of Employment Law, including harassment, discrimination, retaliation and improper governmental activities. In addition to expert investigative services, Deborah provides consulting regarding optimal management practices, including one-on-one executive coaching; mediation and hearing officer services; and advice and counseling regarding employment law matters. She conducts frequent interactive training seminars on a variety of topics.

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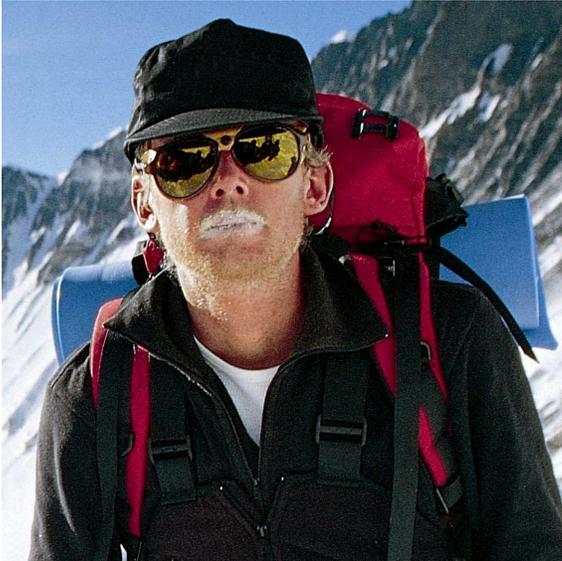
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PREVIOUS EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL EVENTS

November 15, 2011

The Tao of Everest The Gentle Art of Personal Inspiration & Practical Leadership

Speaker: Ian Woodall



Ian Woodall

Business Partner Sponsors:

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Ian Woodall was born in England, but then spent twenty-two years in South Africa, before returning to the UK. Between 1996 and 2007 Ian conceived, planned and led five expeditions to Mount Everest, reaching the summit on two occasions. Before embarking on his Everest expeditions Ian worked as a school teacher, an internal auditor, a restaurant owner & head chef, as well as serving as an officer in the British Army.

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2011 COMMUNITY CHALLENGE WEEKEND

Central California Labrador Retriever Rescue

*"To have six usable kennels is like gold to us," – Jackie Gilson,
President of the CCLRR*

On November 5th, 35 members, vendors and friends of the Sacramento Valley Chapter got together to repair and clean up kennels for the Central California Labrador Retriever Rescue (CCLRR). All labs rescued from shelters must be quarantined for kennel cough before going to foster homes. CCLRR had six roofed kennels they could not utilize as they were in need of major clean up and repair to the roof and exterior fences. There was a lot of hard work and lots of goat poop to be cleared!! We filled a whole dumpster with debris, cleared the area, power washed the kennels, and repaired the roof. We then put mesh around the kennels to cut down the cold breezes and affixed barriers between the kennels. The transformation was amazing.

The CCLRR is an all volunteer organization which was founded in 1998 to find loving homes for abused, abandoned or unwanted Labrador Retrievers in the Central Valley. In 2010 they brought in 426 labs in need of new homes; this year they've had a lab with a broken leg, one with a disconnected kneecap, three dogs with ACL injuries, two heartworm positive dogs, a dog hit by a car with a severely lacerated leg, several females used for breeding who were dumped because of age and a pregnant lab left at the shelter where she gave birth to 7 puppies (only 1 survived and mom is fighting for her life).

In addition to making the kennels habitable, we were able to donate \$3,000 to the rescue thanks to our business partner sponsor, SourceCorp, as well as donations from several law firms and the Chapter, so the CCLRR can continue to help our four-legged friends who cannot help themselves.

Please consider the CCLRR for your adoption needs. They have so many adorable labs available that would not be with us if not for their dedication. Go here to see an article about SVALA on their website and the labs they have available: http://www.cc-labrescue.org/available_list.php.



COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

2011 CCW



HOLIDAY LUNCH

ESQUIRE GRILL
DECEMBER 9, 2011



UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL EVENTS

The luncheon cost for ALA members is now included in our annual membership dues!*

*(Exceptions are the "special" luncheons such as the Educational Seminar, Holiday Luncheon and Managing Partner Event)

January 31, 2012

Annual Winter Labor Law Breakfast

7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.— Full Breakfast
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Labor Law Update

\$35.00 per person

Casa Garden Restaurant
2760 Sutterville Road

Topic: Learn What Happened in 2011 and How to Prepare for 2012:
A Legislative and Case Law Update

Presenters: Jerry J. Deschler and Nathan W. Austin

Attorneys from the Sacramento office of Jackson Lewis LLP. Messrs. Deschler and Austin represent management in all aspects of workplace law and related litigation. Mr. Deschler's practice focuses on advising and representing management in all types of Administrative matters, as well as state and federal court actions. Mr. Austin's practices focuses on advising and defending management in Wage & Hour, and Class Action lawsuits.

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BOARD MEETING MINUTES SUMMARY

Board of Directors Meeting held November 2011

The November Board of Directors Meeting was held at the office of Hansen Bridgett LLP on Tuesday, November 8, 2011. President Jessica Miller presided. The September 2011 minutes were previously approved unanimously via email. The September and October 2011 financials were approved unanimously at the meeting.

Treasurer, Cindy Cintas Pilon, reported that we received a check from the State Franchise Board for overpayment of 2010 taxes. We also received a refund from the IRS for taxes paid in 2011. We should get another refund from the IRS for the amended 2010 return. Our CPA will need to then amend our State and Federal 2009 returns.

Director at Large, Craig Price, reported that we broke even on the salary survey. Membership Chair, Penny Stauffer, reported that she is working on the directory. Penny was also notified by Headquarters of two new members.

Programs and Education chair, Deana Xryztion, reported on upcoming luncheons. Deana also said that a couple of the sponsors asked if they could attend future presentations as guests instead of as sponsors. The Board discussed this but decided it would give these sponsors an unfair advantage over other sponsors. Deana has contracted with Casa Garden for the winter educational session. The event is scheduled for January 31 from 8:30 – 11:30 with breakfast served in main dining room from 7:30 – 8:30.

Newsletter Chair, Vicki Robinson, reported that the newsletter went out and Cindy Harris won the Pop Quiz prize. The next newsletter will be sent out in December after the Holiday Party. Website Chair, Cheri Blethen, reported that she and Kathy will meet regarding suggested changes to the Business Partner page. Cheri also said if there are pictures from CCW, she will post them to the website.

Business Partner Relations Co-Chairs, Kathy Davidson-Brown and Sylvia Warner, reported they have sent out over 50 packets to potential business sponsors. Many of the current sponsors have renewed. There was more discussion about having Business Partners attend luncheons and it was agreed that Platinum level sponsors can attend any luncheon (at their cost) and this benefit will be effective immediately.

Prior to the meeting, a motion was made via email by Community Challenge Weekend Chair, Joelle Stone, to give the amount of money raised through donations and the sponsorship to the Central California Labrador Retriever Rescue and that SVALA donate the amount to cover expected expenses. The motion passed unanimously. Joelle reported the lab rescue group was very excited and grateful about the project and the check.

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BOARD MEETING MINUTES SUMMARY (continued)

Michele Tracy reported on preparations for the Holiday party. There will be raffle prizes and everyone will be asked to donate a gift to be given to the St. John's Shelter. Nominating Committee Chair, Lynn Cole, reported that she has most of the board positions filled for the 2012/2013 SVALA Board of Directors ballot.

New Business discussed included a suggestion for a SVALA Facebook page which the Board briefly discussed but concluded there was not a compelling reason to have one. President, Jessica Miller, announced our Chapter won a Region scholarship to the Annual Conference in Honolulu (registration plus \$400). Jessica drew four names (a winner and three back ups). Names drawn (in order) were Kathy Davidson Brown, Joelle Stone, Trish Hughes Kreis and Craig Price. A suggestion was made to purchase a five webinar package deal offered through ALA. The Board briefly discussed but the opinion is that we would not be significantly saving enough to risk zero attendance at some of the webinars. Deana suggested that the webinars we do hold be held at different offices in order to boost attendance. The Board agreed to this suggestion.



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CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY

January 10, 2012

SVALA Board Meeting

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Location: Hanson Bridgett
500 Capitol Mall, Suite 1500

January 31, 2012

SVALA Breakfast Meeting

Time: 7:30a.m.—11:30a.m.

Location: Casa Garden Restaurant
Topic: Employment Law/Policy Updates

FEBRUARY

February 2012

SVALA Luncheon

Time: 12:45p.m.

Location: Casa Garden Restaurant
Topic: Healthcare Reform

MARCH

March 15, 2012

Managing Partner Luncheon

Time: 11:30-2:00

Location: Sutter Club
1220 9th Street

Topic: The Art of Wine Tasting

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual ALA Conference

April 22-26, 2012
Honolulu, Hawaii

Region 6 Annual Conference & Exposition

October 11-13, 2012
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