

# Northern California Association of Law Librarians

## Pleased to Meet You – Making Connections That Count

**By: Shannon Burchard**, University of San Francisco School of Law Library

**Diane Rodriguez**, Hassard Bonnington LLP

**Julie Horst**, Hastings College of the Law Library

**Coral Henning**, Sacramento County Public Law Library

Every day you work with people and make connections, but are there important ones you're missing? Are you maximizing the most important connections you make? Whether you work in a law firm, academic, or public law library there are simple steps law librarians can take to increase networking opportunities and enhance connections.

### **The Law Firm & Beyond**

#### • Business Card Name Game

We all exchange business cards, but what do you do with those cards once you return to your office? You can easily use your cards to build relationships and expand your network. Each time you collect a new card, take a moment to make some notes on the back to help you remember your new acquaintance. Try to take note of something you discussed such as a management issue, their latest vacation, or their favorite book – something you can bring up later to continue the discussion. Once you get back to your office, keep new business cards next to your computer monitor or some other location on your

desk where you are reminded to take action. Each day, take a few cards and send an email greeting and possibly an invitation to become part of your LinkedIn Network. A simple greeting can pave the way to a great new relationship.

#### • Working Your Coworkers – Professional Cross-Training

Invite your law firm partners and other management staff to subject-appropriate meetings of your professional association and tell them of your interest in attending their professional meetings, when applicable and appropriate. Professional cross-training is a great way to discover other perspectives on management issues of the law firm, including information services. By broadening your perspective firm-wide, you can better prioritize your budget and services to fit firm strategies and goals, arming you with greater leverage for enhancements and change. For example, attend ALA (Association of Legal Administrators) meetings with members of your firm's management team and gain new insight into administrative issues. Attend presentations held for the firm's partners on topics such as discovery techniques and private investigations. You can report back on these sessions and market your new skills to the firm.

#### • Finding Roles Outside the Stacks

Look for opportunities outside traditional librarian roles within your firm to expand your horizons and opportunities. Join a committee unrelated to library business such as the charitable giving, holiday planning, or diversity committees. One of the authors joined her firm's holiday planning committee and was assigned to the charitable giving committee. She researched opportunities for legal-related charities in San Francisco and became involved with the CASA program (Court Appointed Special Advocacy program for foster children in California). Not only was it a rewarding experience to help children in need, but the librarian met a whole new group of people with legal needs and contacts. As a result of her firm's fundraising and continued involvement with the CASA Program, she is now invited to their fundraisers and thank-you events where she is seated at tables with leaders in the local and state legal community as well as leaders in local business such as bank executives, local politicians, and even clients of the firm! This law firm librarian not only expanded her network but gave her firm some great PR.

### **The World of Academia**

#### • Pre Networking – Who to Meet & Where to Meet 'em

There are many people and places on an academic campus where you can practice your networking skills. Law school librarians already interact with professors and students, so this is about networking with the rest of the folks on campus. Attend as many campus functions as you can. Some examples:

• Staff parties like birthday, retirement, or holiday parties

• Casual events such as book club readings or special events

• Scholarly events such as symposia or lectures

• How to Start Talking

While at these functions, start conversations with people. Introduce yourself and if they don't offer their name, ask them who they are and which department they work in. If you don't know where they work, ask. What do they do there? How

**saclaw.org**

## Come Together Pet Lovers: A Legal Romp

April 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007  
**Sacramento County Public Law Library**  
813 6<sup>th</sup> Street, First Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 874-8541

# "Yappy Hour" Reception

Friday, April 20, 2007 from 5:30pm to 7:30pm

- "Yappy Hour" proceeds to benefit the City of Sacramento Animal Shelter
- Book signing by Gina Spadafori, *Pet Connection*, Columnist & Author
- Pet Adopt-a-thon - S.N.O. Mobile (Spay Neuter Outreach)
- "My Best Friend" Art Show
- Readings by *Pet Psychic*, Linda Schooler
- BARK magazine presentation
- Music provided by "The Gecko Band"
- Food...Fun...Prizes...and MORE!

**We're sorry pets (except for services animals) may not attend.**

**Suggested Donation: \$10.00**

First 100 attendees will receive a FREE Emergency Pet Preparedness Kit

Contact info: For more information on NOCALL, please visit <http://www.nocall.org>. If you would like to be a part of NOCALL, a membership application is available at <http://www.nocall.org/forms/membershipapp.pdf>.

long have they worked there? By asking these questions you form a connection to the person which will be the foundation of your relationship based on what you have in common.

At future functions or just walking around campus, continue the connection you began:

- After initial contact, remember what you have in common with that person so that when you see him or her again, you can begin where you left off.
- Ask open-ended, thought-provoking questions. You've heard this before: Avoid "yes/no" questions.
- Listen and make eye contact as you converse; smile, nod, and make appropriate facial expressions.
- It's important to show genuine interest in what they're saying or they will think you're a phony. But then again, if you honestly don't like them, don't worry. Not everyone likes everyone else all the time. Don't force a connection if you don't really feel it.
- Building Relationships – Nurture Your Network

To get to work with people over time:

- Volunteer to be on a project with them. This allows you to learn whom they know and what their area of expertise is. This kind of information can really expand your network.
- Develop a mentor or mentee relationship with someone.
- To really get to know someone, ask them out to lunch...and pay for it.

### Ready for the Public

- Elevator Speech

Develop an "elevator speech." An "elevator speech" is a thirty-second introduction about you that is compelling, clear, and concise. End with an invitation for interaction. For example, consider this anecdote from one of the authors: I was recently on an airplane and the gentleman next to me was telling me about his business. When he finished, he asked me what line of work I was in. I said, "Guess. I am the director of a business that has a budget of 3 million dollars and has two locations in the state capitol, Sacramento. I employ nineteen people and we have provided free public access to legal information for over 100 years. Where do I work?" The gentleman was quite perplexed, "Legal aid, ACLU?" he guessed. Wrong! I am the Director of the Sacramento County Public Law Library! Now I had his attention and he was

eager to hear more about what a fantastic resource California county public law libraries are.

- Gathering Nontraditional Patrons – Creating a Buzz

So you want you and your institution to be noticed, but how you create a buzz? Do something HOTR (hilarious, outrageous, taboo or remarkable). Reach out to people or groups that at first blush may have no obvious connection to you or your institution. For example, the staff at Sacramento County Public Law Library is always trying to spread the word to the greater Sacramento region that the library is an excellent resource. The library offers classes on legal topics for the public and practitioners, meeting rooms for rent, free Westlaw® and Lexis® – you name it, the Sacramento Public Law Library is "one stop shopping" for all of your legal research needs – but there are still people who have never heard of it. Last April for National Library Week, the staff at the Sacramento Public Law Library set out to change that. When they got together and considered their common interests, they noted that most of the staff had a pet. A brainstorming session on creating a pet-centric National Library Week celebration produced Come Together Pet Lovers: A Legal Romp. During the week the library held classes with such titles as "Dog Bites: Avoiding Canine Litigation," "Estate Planning for Your Companion Animal/Pet," and "Forming an Animal Friendly 501(3)(c) Nonprofit Corporation." These classes were sold out and over 100 new

### What to talk about

Things you found out that you have in common based on initial interaction  
 Travel plans  
 Movies you've seen, or plan on seeing  
 Art, plays, shows, events (Bay to Breakers, etc.)  
 Pets  
 Campus news or events  
 "How was your weekend?"  
 "Do you have weekend plans?"  
 "Can you believe this fog? Isn't this the worst summer weather ever?"

users came to Sacramento County Public Law Library! The week's activities culminated in a "Yappy Hour" reception with the proceeds benefiting the City of Sacramento Animal Shelter.

Not everyone works in a vibrant office or library where all of these opportunities are available. Sometimes you may have to create your own opportunities such as hosting library events, creating a charitable campaign, or joining a professional association outside of traditional librarianship. The opportunities are out there, you just need to uncover them!

\*\*\* This article is adapted from a presentation given at the American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting & Conference, July 17, 2007, in New Orleans, LA.

Monday, April 16	Tuesday, April 17	Wednesday, April 18	Thursday, April 19	Friday, April 20
<b>My Best Friend</b> an art show of mixed media animal themed art on display and for sale throughout the month of APRIL.	<b>Emergency Pet Preparedness – Roundtable Discussion</b> <b>Time:</b> 5:30pm to 7:00pm <b>Cost: \$5.00</b> A panel with representatives from United Animal Nations, the American Red Cross and County of Sacramento Emergency Operations Center- Animal Care.	<b>Setting up a Non-Profit Animal Friendly 501(c)3 Organization</b> <b>Time:</b> 4:00pm to 5:30pm <b>1.5 MCLE credits</b> <b>Cost: \$20.00</b> by Jeff Curcio, Partner @ Murphy Austin Adams & Schoenfeld  <b>Law Library Tour</b> <b>Time:</b> 3:30pm to 4:00pm <b>Cost: FREE</b> Library tour with emphasis on public access to animal related legal information, and more.	<b>Estate Planning for Your Companion Animal/Pet</b> <b>Time:</b> 4:00pm to 5:30pm <b>1.5 MCLE credits</b> <b>Cost: \$20.00</b> by Timothy Murphy, Attorney at Law  <div style="border: 1px solid green; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">           Class attendees will receive a <b>FREE</b> Emergency Pet Preparedness Kit         </div>	<b>Dog Bites: Avoiding Canine Litigation</b> <b>Time:</b> 4:30pm to 5:30pm <b>1 MCLE credit</b> <b>Cost: \$20.00</b> by Christopher Kreeger, Attorney at Law  <b>"Yappy Hour" Reception</b> <b>Time: 5:30pm to 7:30pm</b> <b>Suggested Donation: \$10.00</b> Presentation by <b>BARK Magazine</b> , Assistant Editor, Cameron Woo Music by <b>"The Gecko Band"</b> Readings by <b>"Pet Psychic"</b> Linda Schooler Book signing by Gina Spadafori, <b>Pet Connection</b> , Columnist & Author  <b>Pet Adopt-a-thon - S.N.O. Mobile (Spay Neuter Outreach)</b> staffed by the City of Sacramento Animal Shelter.

**How to Register for Classes**  
 Registration: Pre-payment is required. To register online with your Master Card® or Visa® go to [www.saclaw.org](http://www.saclaw.org) and select the "Classes" tab at the top of the page. Locate a class by date, and complete the registration process. For other payment options or additional information, call (916) 874-8541.  
 Location: Sacramento County Public Law Library, 813 6th Street, First Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814  
 Parking: Park at 7th & G St., Sacramento County Parking Garage, bring your parking receipt and we will validate for time spent in an SCPLL class.

**Art Show, Classes & "Yappy Hour" proceeds to benefit the City of Sacramento Animal Shelter**