

Equal Access

Volume 3, Issue 1, 2009

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Newsletter of the
Council of California
County Law Librarians



U.S. Public Printer Visits Honored Law Library By Ed Butler

An exemplary job of performing the basics of a Federal Depository Library resulted in the 2008 Federal Depository Library of the Year award going to the Law Library for San Bernardino County. So explained U.S. Public Printer Robert C. Tapella, in his visit to the library November 12 to help mark bestowal of the annual award.

In his official role of recording the actions of government and making them available to the public in perpetuity, Tapella said depository libraries are an important intermediary in providing documents to the public. As recommended by a selection committee and with broad patron and community support, this library was singled out in particular for its service practices including outreach to the public, Tapella said.

Speakers at the November 12 ceremony included Judge Keith Davis, library board president. State Assemblywoman Wilmer Cater emphasized the importance of public libraries to a democracy. "Access to information is as American as apple pie," she said. The library received a certificate from State Senator Gloria Negrete McLeod praising it "for your outstanding job providing and safeguarding a vital link between the public and its government."

Dignitaries on hand to offer their congratulations also included State Assemblyman William Emmerson; Mayor Grace Vargas of Rialot; San Bernardino County Public Defender Doreen Boxer; Rancho Cucamonga City Councilman Sam Spagnolo; Tory Trotta, of the Federal Depository Library Council, director of the law library at Arizona State University, Tempe; Bob Riger, director of the San Diego County Public Law Library; and Barbara Keough, board member of the San Bernardino County Bar Association.

Local Law Day Recognized by ABA

The American Bar Association has recognized the collaborative efforts of Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance, the Kern County Law Library, the Kern County Family Court Facilitator and the Kern County Bar Association, as a 2008 Law Day Outstanding Activity Award Winner in the less than \$1000 budget category. The Kern County efforts included two distinct Law Day programs ongoing workshops and presentations at the Law Library, and interactive sessions between attorneys and high school students. The award will be presented at the ABA's semi-annual meeting in Boston in February, 2009.

The three driving forces behind these successful Law Day efforts were GBLA's Volunteer Attorney Coordinator Carol Bracy, Law Librarian Annette Heath, and Family Law Facilitator Theresa Gary. The 2008 Law Day theme, *Celebrating the Rule of Law*, was then featured on t-shirts for those involved in the Law Day presentations, as well as posters announcing the programs.

The Law Library presentations began with an open house which also celebrated the opening of the new self help room in the Law Library. Presiding Judge Jerold Turner, Court Administrative Officer Terry McNally, and Kern County Bar President David Torres made speeches. During the rest of the week, attorney volunteers who were experts in their fields provided informative workshops on various issues.

Although the Law Day Team submitted the description of their efforts to the American Bar Association, they were surprised and honored by the award. They are newly inspired to reach more people in 2009.

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University of San Diego Legal Clinics

The University of San Diego Legal Clinics began in the early seventies when students saw a need for legal services in their community. A volunteer faculty advisor and a dedicated group of students began working with community store fronts providing free legal services to low income families. After 37 years of service to the community, the USD Legal Clinics will be receiving the prestigious Bernard E. Witkin Award for outstanding service to the community in the educator category.

The USD Legal Clinics and the San Diego County Public Law Library have partnered together to provide assistance to pro se litigants (persons representing themselves without an attorney). On scheduled times during the academic school year, law students, supervised by a USD professor who is a member of the California State Bar, meet with litigants to provide information and advice. When possible and appropriate, the litigants are referred to the Legal Clinics for further representation in such areas as: Immigration, Entrepreneurship, Tenant's Rights, Small Claims, Special Education and Tax.

Recently, the USD Legal Clinics and the San Diego Law Library collaborated on a video for self represented litigants. The video highlights important information for pro se litigants regarding general court procedures, including dress and comportment.

California Counties-A State Of Progress

'California Counties- A State of Progress' was the theme of the 2008 Annual California State Association of Counties (CSAC) meeting held early December, 2008, in San Diego, California. Our table was well positioned and quite eye-appealing with many wonderful and clever promotional items donated by our member libraries. We attracted many people as we promoted the California county wide libraries, including newly elected county supervisors, supervisorial staffers, and public works administrators. Facilities was the key topic of these conversations!

CSAC was well attended, even in this downturned economy and with a meeting immediately following the long Thanksgiving holiday. The exhibit hall was filled with vendors who provide support and out-sourced services and products used by the government. With the exception of the San Diego Public Library, public libraries did not have a presence at the conference unlike last year. However, in speaking to the librarian that was there, she echoed what many of us already know: Libraries are busier than ever due to the bad economy, yet faced with an uncertain future. In that respect, we both acknowledged that visibility and promotion of our free access and services to our governing authorities was more important than ever.

Thank you to all those libraries that sent promotional literature and give-away times. Special thanks to Coral Henning, Sacramento, for loan of the display board, and Kathryn Turner, Yolo, for storing materials. And another thank you to Annette, Larry and Bob for helping out, and Annette's husband for transporting our display to San Diego! It was a group effort for the benefit of all California county law libraries! Let's begin planning for CSAC 2009!

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County Law
Libraries

Open to the
Public

Established in
1891

Governed by a
Board of
Trustees

Funded by a
Portion of Court
Filing Fees

Upcoming Workshops

Fresno (in conjunction with Central California Legal Services)

Guardianship Workshops (Every 3rd Thursday of each month)

Kern

Pleading and File Preparation (Family Law: Order to Show Cause, Child Custody, and Child Visitation), *Mondays (9:30-11:30 a.m.)*

Small Claims -Basic Procedure: *Mondays (11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.)*

Guardianship Of A Minor Person: *Mondays & Tuesdays (1:30 -4:00 p.m.)*

How To Prepare Your Answer to An Unlawful Detainer (Tenants): *Tuesdays (9:00 a.m.) & Thursdays (10 a.m.)*

Presenting Your Case in Court (Family Law), *Tuesdays (10:30 a.m. - 12:00 Noon) & Thursdays (2:30 - 4:00 p.m.)*

How To Probate A Small Estate: *3rd Tuesday of each month (12:15 -1:15 p.m.)*

How To Begin The Eviction Process (Landlords): *Wednesdays & Fridays (10:30 -11:30 a.m.)*

Riverside

Filing Petition/Response (Family Law), *Every 2nd Monday of each month (5:30 -8:30 p.m.)*

Filing Default Judgment (Family Law), *Every 2nd Wednesday of each month (5:30-8:30 p.m.)*

The ABC's of What to Do If You Think You Might Have a Medical Malpractice Case, *January 6, 2009 (7:00 - 8:00 p.m.)*

The ABC's of Homeowners Associations, *March 3, 2009 (7:00 - 8:00 p.m.)*

Sacramento

Writing For The Legal Professional: Motions, *January 7, 2009 (6:00 - 8:00 p.m.)*

Economic Analysis In Employment Matters: *January 8, 2009 (2:30-4:30 p.m.)*

Developing An Effective Business Plan For Lawyers: *January 13, 2009 (1:30-3:30 p.m.)*

San Diego-Main Workshops are free for SDCPLL Members, \$5.00 Non-Members (Call 619.531.3900 or sign up at the circulation desk)

Hiring and Firing: How to Avoid Mistakes, *January 8, 2009 (2:00-5:30 p.m.)*

Bankruptcy, *January 15, 2009 (Noon - 1:00 p.m.)*

San Diego-North Co. Workshops are free for SDCPLL Members, \$5.00 Non-Members

Hiring and Firing: How to Avoid Mistakes-Part One, *January 20, 2009 (Noon-1:30 p.m.)*

Hiring and Firing: How to Avoid Mistakes-Part Two, *January 22, 2009 (Noon-1:30 p.m.)*

San Diego-South Bay

Computer Forensics: Cybercrime, Identity Theft and Computer Security, *January 13, 2009 (Noon-1:00 pm.)*

Identity Theft: Avoid Being A Victim, *January 22, 2009 (Noon - 1:00 p.m.)*

**MCLE Credit is available for these classes.*

San Mateo - Brown Bag Lectures (12:00 Noon)

Adoption Search Workshop, *January 15, 2009*

Foreclosure, February 19, 2009

Estate Planning For Pets, March 12, 2009

Basic Bankruptcy For Debtors, April 9, 2009

For more information on any event, visit the individual library website.