



SCALL Newsletter

Southern California Association of Law Libraries

Volume 31, Number 2

A Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries

November 2003

President's Column

by Diana Jaque
djaque@law.usc.edu

Looking Forward to Our Spring Institute

Where has Fall gone? Plans are in full swing for the 2004 SCALL Institute on February 27-28, 2004 at the Doubletree Club Hotel in San Diego. For those of you working on your spring budgets, room rates are \$92 plus tax. Registration fees are \$95 for members (\$105 late registration) and \$45 (\$55 late registration) for students and retirees. Member rates will be extended to our NOCALL, SANDALL, and WESTPAC colleagues. Two pre-conferences, one on Thursday afternoon sponsored by LexisNexis, the other on Friday morning sponsored by West, will supplement our usual Friday afternoon and Saturday morning sessions. Watch the SCALL listserv and your mail for registration details. Please contact Jennifer Berman (jberman@mwe.com) to volunteer.

Speaking of the Institute, the Daily Journal Corporation has committed to fund several grants for the 2004 Institute. The grants are open to SCALL members and students. Contact SCALL grants chair Tom Fleming (tbf@jmbm.com) for further information or to apply. Thanks to the Daily Journal Corporation for funding the grants and enabling our members to attend the SCALL Institute in these challenging economic times..

News Bits and Bytes

Plan ahead and save the date for our annual Holiday Meeting to be held on Tuesday, December 9, 2003 at Madame Wu's at the Grove. Our new program chairs, Laura Cadra and Renee Rastorfer, have planned an all-you-care-to-eat feast. See the registration form in this newsletter for further details. Thanks to the information technology committee, particularly Ramon Barajas, SCALL has a new and improved presence on the web. All of us appreciate Ramon's hard work completing the web site redesign over the past twelve months. Committee members Darin Fox and Patrick Meyer contributed to the new web site as well.

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President's Column

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Finally, this newsletter issue will be the last one under the editorship of Margot McLaren. Although Margot will continue to write columns for the newsletter, Victoria Williamson has stepped forward to assume the editorship. We appreciate Margot's dedication over the last three years as editor and thank Vicky for taking the helm.

The *SCALL Newsletter* Staff

The **SCALL Newsletter** is published electronically five times per year (September, November, January, March and May) by the Southern California Association of Law Libraries, a chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries. Visit the SCALL website at <http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/scall>.

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From the Editor

Margot McLaren
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My term as editor for the SCALL Newsletter ends with the November 2003 issue.

I thoroughly enjoyed my three years as editor, and I want to express my deepest appreciation to all SCALL members who worked hard for the newsletter. I will continue to be involved with the newsletter committee and will contribute future articles. Beginning with the January 2004 issue, Victoria Williamson also of the University of La Verne College of Law Library will assume the position of editor.

Judge Michael Nash was the guest speaker at our October meeting. In this issue, Ed Butler of the San Bernardino County Law Library summarizes Judge Nash's presentation on the condition of the Los Angeles County juvenile courts. Photographs of the meeting taken by Belinda Beardt are included.

SCALL Newsletter Submission Deadlines

If you would like to submit something for publication in the SCALL Newsletter, the deadlines are the following:

October 13, 2003	November 2003 issue
December 8, 2003	January 2004 issue
February 9, 2004	March 2004 issue
April 12, 2004	May 2004 issue

We welcome the submission of any articles of interest to the law library community. Contact Margot McLaren, SCALL Newsletter Editor, at mclarenm@ulv.edu.

SCALL Institute Reminder!

Make plans to attend the 2004 SCALL Institute in sunny San Diego! The conference will be held at the Doubletree Club Hotel on February 27 and 28, 2004. Watch the SCALL list and online newsletter for program and registration details.

Anyone interested in volunteering should contact 2004 Institute Chair Jennifer Berman (jberman@mwe.com).



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Condition of Juvenile Courts in California

by Ed Butler, San Bernardino County Law Library

Previously a prosecutor in the criminal justice system, Judge Michael Nash is dedicated these days to suppressing the seeds of crime at the childhood age level.

Presiding judge of the Los Angeles County juvenile court system, Judge Nash described his vision for reform of that system at the Oct. 29 quarterly membership dinner meeting of the Southern California Association of Law Libraries.

The judge spoke positively of gains that have been achieved and goals set to the diners assembled at the Taix French Restaurant in Los Angeles' Echo Park district.

Judge Nash emphasized the importance of responding to the individual needs of children in both the dependency and delinquency branches of the juvenile court system and cooperation among all involved agencies, official service providers and affected families.

As an example of cooperation, he said the dependency and delinquency branches of the court are working together to encourage education and literacy for children in the system. Efforts include supporting foster children in their obtaining library cards and creating a pilot plan for the educational expectations of children in the dependency and delinquency systems.

"Literacy is the key to so many different things," the judge said.

A juvenile court judge since 1990, and a bench supervisor in the system nine years, Judge Nash is working on making the system more family friendly in the context of families splitting apart. Ways to achieve this include greater continuity of judicial staffing and leadership and partnering more with other players, such as the county department of juvenile and family court services.

Venturing away from a "cookie cutter approach," the dependency court aims to conduct hearings, which allow the design of solutions that fit the needs of a particular child. He said this kind of individualized approach is also needed in delinquency court to help rehabilitate acting up children and send them back to the community "better than we found them."

Reform goals for the delinquency court include having probation officers function more as social workers to respond more effectively to the various needs of the child. Further, the criminal defense attorneys who defend accused juveniles need to do more than "get the kid off," also advocating for the defendant as he interacts with rehabilitative agencies.

Judge Nash also sees a need for the delinquency court judges to take a greater oversight role, not just referring defendants to agencies but also making sure there is progress. The system includes 18 probation camps, for example.

He also sees a need to involve the families more in adjudication, to support them in assuming responsibility for the rehabilitation of the child.

Judge Nash spoke with pride of how the dependency court has reduced its caseload from about 50,000 foster children five years ago to approximately 30,000 now. The system has been able to greatly expedite adoption, he said, the preferred "permanent plan" for displaced children, by expediting reviews to see if such children can be effectively reunited with their families and procedural changes to support adoption. He said law changes have supported seeking permanent resolution for such children as soon as possible and hundreds of attorneys have been recruited to handle such cases on a pro bono basis.

The court has also promoted adoption and the attitude that affected children, the victims of abuse and neglect, "are not damaged goods, they are just kids."

The judge pointed out that the scope of these challenges is large, as the Los Angeles juvenile court system he oversees comprises 60 fulltime courts. These include 27 delinquency courts with 20,000 youth adjudicated guilty under their review, 20 dependency courts handling 30,000 children, and 13 informal courts that handle traffic and other minor offenses such as alcohol and curfew violations. Last year, 175,000 such cases were heard in the county.

Demonstrating his own dedication to supporting children in effective living, Judge Nash proclaimed the heady goal to "change the world one child at a time . . . I'm confident we're doing things that are going to right the ship."

Noting that children in the dependency system are at risk of crossing into the delinquency system, he said the court's goal is "to even the odds for these kids" to help them be "productive members of society."

See photographs of the October SCALL Meeting on page 7.

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A Snapshot Review of the SCALL Meeting

October 29, 2003

Taix Restaurant, Los Angeles

(All photos courtesy of Belinda Beardt)



Jim Senter (left) and Michael St. Onge (right) share an amusing story.



Brian Keefe (center) from the University of La Verne Law Library.



SCALL Pres. Diana Jaque opens the dinner meeting.



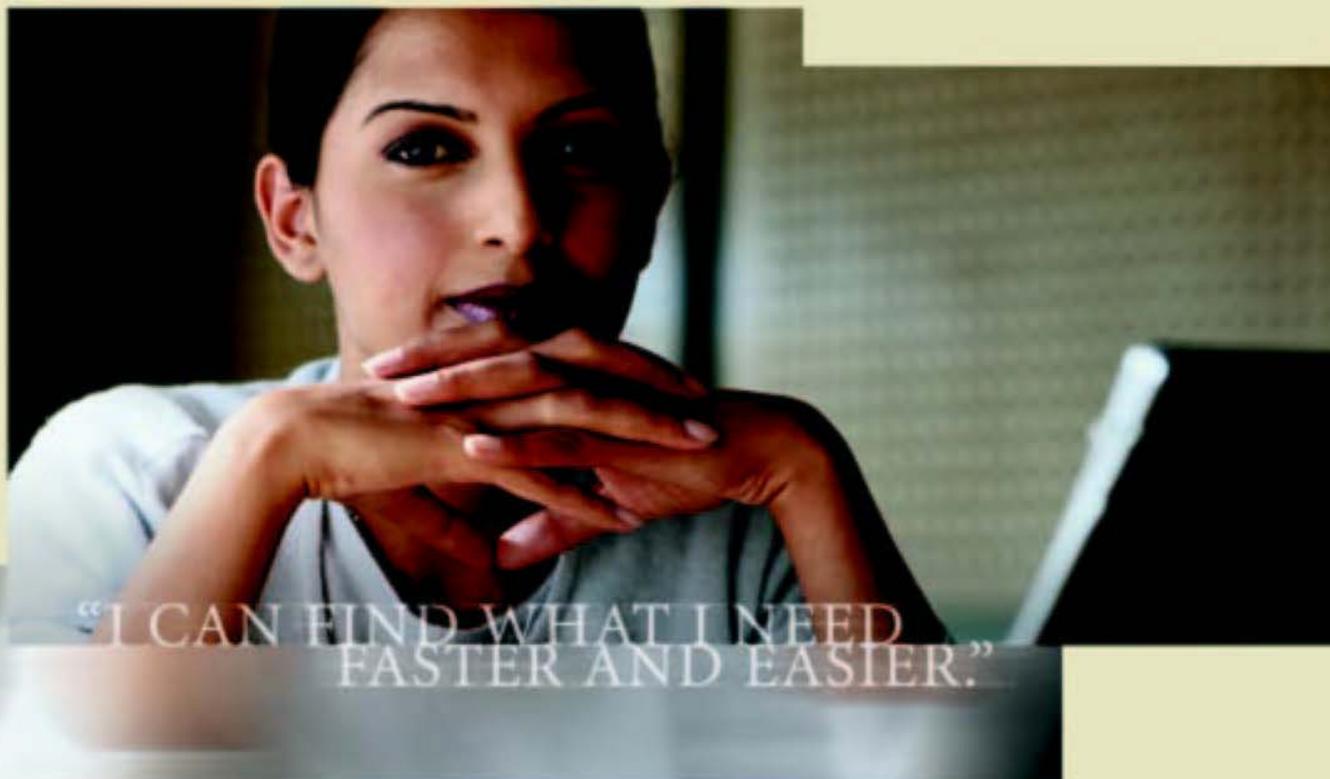
Brian Keefe addresses the attendees.



Patrick Meyer and Michael St. Onge trade a chuckle.



Jennifer Berman and David Burch listen to the speaker.



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Evening Access Services/Reference Librarian, UCLA, Hugh & Hazel Darling Law Library, Los Angeles

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