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for information and links to  
our valued Business Partners.



by BARBARA KUHLMKE

## Spirit of the Chapter

*Here we are, smack dab in the middle of the Holiday Season! I love the holidays so much that many years ago a friend dubbed me a “Christmas bunny.”*

Not in a dear sweet *aren't you cute* kind of way, but in an *Oh my gosh, Barbara, you're driving me crazy with all your over the top holiday tradition* way. I can't help it; I just get swept up in the spirit of the season, and I love the continuity of tradition.

That “giving” spirit of the holiday season came early and often in 2009. During the month of October, I watched as our members happily gave of their time, themselves and their money to embrace the spirit of our Chapter.

First, and foremost, the Dallas Chapter is a professional organization formed to provide support and education to professionals involved in legal management. With that mission in mind, 19 Chapter members attended the Regional Conference in San Antonio in early October. I was pleased that we were able to provide stipends to our members.

The educational sessions were some of the best I have attended, but the education did not end there. I was struck by the camaraderie of the group as we manned our Dallas Booth to promote next year's Region 4 Conference in Dallas. Over lunch, dinner and, of course, cocktails, members shared their experiences and ideas with one another. Much time was spent brainstorming about the unique issues that our firms face in these economic times. It was satisfying to listen as members willingly gave of themselves and their expertise.

In mid-October, a group of 17 volunteers boarded a van and headed to the Stewpot



*Continued on page 2*



Continued from page 1

*...I truly believe  
that special  
spirit of giving  
can be found  
any time of  
the year in the  
Dallas Chapter  
ALA.*

where we served 250 homeless adults their evening meal. Half of the group served food in a cafeteria line while the other half walked the floor and poured water for the diners. We all came away from the experience touched by the people that we served, but I also came away with renewed respect for our Chapter members who so willingly gave their time that Friday evening. I was also moved by the generosity of all our Chapter members who collectively donated \$1250 to the Stewpot.

Lastly, at the end of October, despite the fact that it looked like the sky would open up in a torrential storm, 50+ members took a chance and headed out to preserve the tradition of our Annual Golf and Casino Outing. The golf gods must have been smiling down upon us because, at our shot-gun start, the clouds began to clear and we did not have one drop of rain that afternoon. It was fun to watch our Business Partners and our members leave the cares of the office behind for one afternoon to literally play together and build closer bonds with one another. This event exemplified the giving spirit of our Business Partners and the Chapter members whom they serve.

Yes, we are smack dab in the middle of the Holidays, but as I think about our Chapter and the experiences related here, I truly believe that special spirit of giving can be found any time of the year in the Dallas Chapter ALA. I wish all of you a very Happy Holiday Season, however you may celebrate, and thank you for all the support you have given me and our Chapter during the past year.

*Barbara*

We've not only passed the bar...  
**We've raised it!**



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got clm?



## FREE CLM STUDY GUIDE AVAILABLE

To assist those interested in getting their Certified Legal Manager certification, the Dallas Chapter has a study guide that may be used by any member or study group. Please contact the Dallas ALA President to borrow the study guide.

For those interested in additional resources for

CLM exam preparation, you may purchase a study group package from the Mile High (Denver) Chapter. These materials include PDF files, audio files, and a CLM group discussion forum. For more information, e-mail

[clm@cyberala.org](mailto:clm@cyberala.org) or download the form at:  
<http://www.cyberala.org/pub/cyber-clm.pdf>

### Certified Legal Manager (CLM)<sup>SM</sup> Certification Program Exam Dates

Exam Date	Location	Application Deadline
May 2, 2010	Boston, MA	March 15, 2010
September 30, 2010	Philadelphia, PA	August 12 2010
September 30, 2010	Dallas, TX (in conjunction with the Region 4 Conference)	August 12 2010
September 30, 2010	San Diego, CA (in conjunction with the Regions 5 & 6 Conference)	August 12 2010
May 22, 2011	Orlando, FL (in conjunction with the Annual Conference)	March 31, 2011

# New Members

## **Susan (Paige) Bishop**

Office Administrator  
Bryan Cave LLP

2200 Ross Ave., Suite 3300

Dallas, TX 75201

Phone: 214-721-8039

Fax: 214-721-8100

[paige.bishop@bryancave.com](mailto:paige.bishop@bryancave.com)

## **Wendy L. Buechele**

Director of Administration

Vinson & Elkins

2001 Ross Ave, Suite 3700

Dallas, TX 75201

Phone: 214-220-7707

Fax: 214-999-7707

[wbuechele@velaw.com](mailto:wbuechele@velaw.com)

## **Kristi Evans**

Firm Administrator

Travis & Calhoun, PC

5001 Spring Valley Rd.

Suite 1000 East

Dallas, TX 75244

Phone: 972-934-4100

Fax: 972-934-4101

[kristi@travislaw.com](mailto:kristi@travislaw.com)

## **Wendy Rankin**

Collin County Office Manager

Strasburger

2801 Network Blvd.

Frisco, TX 75034

Phone: 469-287-3943

Fax: 469-227-6571

[wendy.rankin@strasburger.com](mailto:wendy.rankin@strasburger.com)

## *Green* Tip of the Month

*By Kris Marohn*

'Tis the season for gift giving. Since some of our clients and business associates don't particularly care for the "box of candy" anymore, I like to find something out of the ordinary that shows my "Green Initiative." If you would prefer to give sustainable, eco-friendly gifts, I have some great suggestions.

I've had an EcoSphere on my desk for a few years now. It's a fully enclosed sphere that has Hawaiian Shrimp in it. You never feed them; they live off the algae that grows on the artificial plants within the sphere. They're supposed to live for two years. Apparently mine like it here because they are coming up on their third birthday now. It's a great conversation piece. If your recipient likes wine, try the organic wine at Whole Foods. The grapes are organically grown and the wine is processed without added sulfites. You can purchase a wine bag made from recycled material and you have a perfect gift.

Plants are always a great present for anyone who works indoors. My office looks like a jungle and I like it that way. Plants reduce your risk of picking up germs from your visitors, clean the air, and absorb the energy that comes out of your computer equipment. Most nurseries carry pots made from recycled materials. Try to get an organically grown plant whenever possible.

If you have a golfer on your list, it's time to convert him or her to biodegradable golf tees. The usual tee is made of materials that take several years to break down if you leave it on the course somewhere. Corn-based tees biodegrade much faster so you won't have to worry about the litter you leave behind. They are available at [GrassRootsStore.com](http://GrassRootsStore.com).

Whatever your gift choice, have a wonderful holiday season and a healthy, happy, green New Year.



All section meetings are held at the Belo, unless otherwise indicated. Parking is available in the Belo underground garage for a minimal charge. Guests are welcome to attend ALA Section Meetings for only \$20. Payment should be made by check payable to Dallas Chapter ALA.

## Principal Administrator



David  
Turner

**Date:** Tuesday, December 1, 2009  
**Time:** Noon – 1:00 PM  
**Location:** Belo – Akin Room  
**Topic:** Roundtable Discussion

*January Meeting: Cancelled*



Jessica  
Smith

**Date:** Tuesday, February 2, 2010  
**Time:** Noon – 1:00 PM  
**Location:** Belo – Akin Room  
**Topic:** Roundtable Discussion

Meetings are held the 1st Tuesday of each month.

**Note:** We're soliciting information from the membership on topics for which we would obtain speakers who are knowledgeable in areas of interest to the Section including the Dallas Real Estate Market, Economic Update, Medical Plan Auditors, Wellness Plans, Coaching/Negotiation, Alternative Billing Strategies, a Report from the ALA National Conference, and any other topics for which there may be interest. Please see Jessica Smith at one of the Section meetings or email her at [jessica.smith@strasburger.com](mailto:jessica.smith@strasburger.com)

For more information, please contact David Turner [dturner@settlepou.com](mailto:dturner@settlepou.com) or Jessica Smith [jessica.smith@strasburger.com](mailto:jessica.smith@strasburger.com)  
*We look forward to seeing you there!*

## In Retrospect

### **Principal Administrators Meeting November 3, 2009 – Roundtable Discussion**

During the November round table the following topics were discussed:

- Budgeting, including discussions on slowing AR; shortening the cash cycle by sooner billing; and issues pertaining to clients' requests for discounts.
- Red Flag Rule
- Holiday Activities: luncheons; dinners; weekday vs weekend events; gift exchanges; client gifts; e-cards; "real" gift cards; etc.

- Leave w/o Pay? This question generated considerable discussion involving absences due to H1N1; working from home; exempt versus non-exempt employees; tracking of attorney paid time off (PTO); group benefits of LT and ST disability and long-term care.
- eBilling: A brief discussion on using an eBilling Hub.

There were favorable comments made after the meeting about the education gained from this round table discussion format.

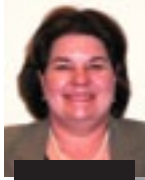
## Multi-Office



**Julie  
Bagby**

**Date:** Tuesday, December 8, 2009  
**Time:** Noon – 1:00 PM  
**Location:** Belo – Carrington Coleman Room

**Date:** Tuesday, January 12, 2010  
**Time:** Noon – 1:00 PM  
**Location:** Belo – Carrington Coleman Room



**Annette  
Schlaf**

We meet the second Tuesday of each month for roundtable discussions.

*We hope to see you there!*

For more information, please contact Julie Bagby [jbagby@mailbmc.com](mailto:jbagby@mailbmc.com)  
 or Annette Schlaf [annette.schlaf@wilsonelser.com](mailto:annette.schlaf@wilsonelser.com)

## Section Meeting News Facilities



**Patrick  
Duron**

*December Meeting: Cancelled*

**Date:** Thursday, January 7, 2010  
**Time:** Noon – 1:00 PM  
**Location:** Belo - Locke Room.  
**Topic:** Speaker from Corporate Care discussing sustainability: Wire management and the modern building, and carpet recycling.



**Richard  
Cantrell**

**Date:** Thursday, February 4, 2010  
**Time:** Noon – 1:00 PM  
**Location:** Belo - Locke Room.  
**Topic:** Roundtable discussion

The Facilities Section meets regularly on the 1st Thursday of each month.

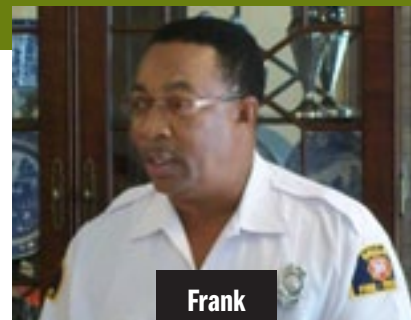
Please contact Patrick Duron 214-855-3504 or [pduron@ccsb.com](mailto:pduron@ccsb.com) if you are planning to attend.  
 For more information, please contact Patrick or Richard Cantrell [richard.cantrell@weil.com](mailto:richard.cantrell@weil.com)

## In Retrospect



**Joe Brennan, Frank Johnson, Richard  
Cantrell, Kris Marohn and Kim Covington**

At the November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Facilities Section, Fire Marshall Frank Johnson discussed home safety tips during the holiday season.



**Frank  
Johnson**

## Human Resources



**Jill  
Granberry**

**Date:** Tuesday, January 26, 2010  
**Time:** Noon – 1:00 PM  
**Location:** Belo – Hughes & Luce Room  
**Topic:** Dewayne Weeks, Director of the Lawyer's Assistant School of Dallas, instructors and graduates of the school will join us to discuss educating the law firm employees of the future. Since 2006, Lawyer's Assistant School of Dallas has been dedicated to training professionals whose education has prepared them to become immediately productive in entry-level support positions and whose skills are consistent with current standards of a law firm and government or business entity.

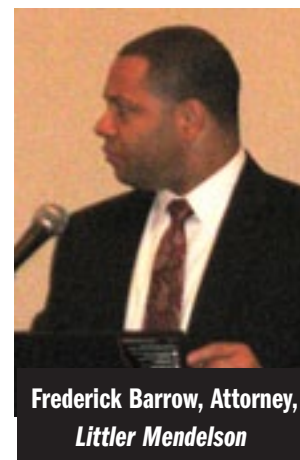


**Donna  
Hetherington**

**Date:** Tuesday, February 23, 2010  
**Time:** Noon – 1:00 PM  
**Location:** Belo – Hughes & Luce Room  
**Topic:** Holiday lunch at Mattito's.

At the November meeting of the HR Section, Frederick Barrow, an attorney with Littler Mendelson, lead a presentation and discussion on Law Firm diversity. See his article on page 11 of this newsletter for more information on this topic.

Meetings are held the 4th Tuesday of each month.  
 For more information, please contact:  
 Donna Hetherington [dhetherington@gardere.com](mailto:dhetherington@gardere.com)  
 or Jill Granberry [jgranberry@velaw.com](mailto:jgranberry@velaw.com) Phone: 214-220-7702



**Frederick Barrow, Attorney,  
Littler Mendelson**

## Financial Management & Systems Technology



**Jake  
Reichenstein**

**Date:** Tuesday, December 15, 2009  
**Time:** Noon – 1:00 PM  
**Location:** Belo – Strasburger Room  
**Topic:** Roundtable Discussion

Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday every other month.

If you plan to attend, please **RSVP** to [jake.reichenstein@fletcherfarley.com](mailto:jake.reichenstein@fletcherfarley.com). Phone: 214-987-9600 x249  
 For more information, contact Jake or Mark Monroy [mark.monroy@strasburger.com](mailto:mark.monroy@strasburger.com)



**Mark  
Monroy**

On October 20, 2009, Doug Kaminski, Director of Sales, Western US for Oce' Business Services made a presentation on "Litigation Support in the New Economy - Strategies for Success" and "Ethics in E-Discovery: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You." Twelve people were in attendance. The Finance/Technology Section did not meet in November.

# North Dallas Section



**Harry Storey**

*January Meeting is cancelled.*

**Date:** Friday, February 26, 2010  
**Time:** Noon – 1:00 PM  
**Location:** TBD  
**Topic:** Speaker - Health Care

Your fellow North Dallas law firm managers met for lunch at noon on Friday, October 30th, at the Monte Carlo restaurant at the InterContinental Hotel in Addison. They enjoyed a roundtable discussion on the following topics: budgeting for 2010; how to control malicious gossip, firm holiday plans, opportunities to get involved in ALA, and many other topics of interest to the members.

Because of everyone's busy December schedule, the attendees decided not to have a meeting in December. The next meeting will be on February 26 with a speaker on health care.

This new section meeting and FREE lunch is open to any Dallas ALA member, but will focus on the needs of those in the North Dallas area. The section will meet at a North Dallas restaurant every other month. Contact Harry Storey (hstorey@hhdulaw.com) if you are interested in joining future North Dallas Section meetings.

*Your connection*  
 to knowledge, resources and networking



## Mark Your Calendar for 2010 Webinars

**Law Firm Innovation: Will You Lead or Follow?**  
 March 17, 2010

**Strategic Planning: Keys to Successful Implementation**  
 June 16, 2010

**The Administrator's Role as Coach in a Multi-Generational Workplace**  
 April 21, 2010

**Legal Risks to Assessing Candidates by Social Network Sites**  
 July 21, 2010

**The Social Networking Revolution**  
 May 19, 2010

**Profitability Enhancement**  
 August 18, 2010

**Electronic Records Management: How to Manage your ESI in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**  
 September 15, 2010

Register or view archived ALA Webinars at [www.alanet.org/webinars](http://www.alanet.org/webinars)

# Diversity Compliance:

## Balancing Diversity-Focused Business Objectives Resulting From Demographic Realities And Threats of Reverse Discrimination Claims

### I. BACKGROUND: Changing Workforce Demographics and Increased Marketplace Competition Influence Diversity Business Strategies and Objectives

For a variety of business and legal reasons, a significant number of today's North American employers are engaged in diversity business strategies and objectives designed to enhance the participation of persons of color and/or women in positions at every level of their organizations' corporate structures. Because talent is found in all types of persons – irrespective of race, national origin, gender, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, communication style, work preference, geographic region and job status – prudent employers understand that it is important to create workplace environments where all employees fully participate in the business processes that create and

sell their companies' products and services. These employers further understand that creating different products and services and/or communicating about them in a way that enhances their appeal to broader, diverse communities are critical for companies seeking to increase "their slices of the marketplace pie" in instances where customers can choose similar products and services from competitors. Research analyzing the buying power of various diverse groups in 2006 reinforce this point:

Group	2008 Population Estimate <sup>1</sup>	Estimated Buying Power <sup>2</sup>
LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) <sup>3</sup>	16 million	\$835 billion
African Americans	41 million	\$965 billion
Hispanics/Latinos	45 million	\$992 billion
Asian Americans	15 million	\$579 billion

Against this contextual backdrop, we appreciate more fully the reasons prudent employers (and other organizations) are thinking more critically about the nuances of the workplace that may be impacting – and in some instances impeding – the contributions and/or progress of women and/or employees of color. Without these groups present in the workplace – and contributing meaningfully – employers risk losing their competitive edge.

### II. TIPS FOR IMPROVING THE DIVERSITY OF YOUR ORGANIZATION

Because there are numerous business benefits to obtaining and retaining a diverse workforce, organizations interested in creating diversity-related business objectives and/or revising them to further enhance their efforts should consider the following:

**A. Avoid the "pressure" by educating managers/leaders implementing diversity objectives.** It is critical that managers and employees fully understand that the goal of diversity is to provide *all* employees an *equal opportunity* for advancement based on their skills and talents without favoring one ethnic or gender group over another. It is important to share that giving employment benefits such as promotions and training to male and/or Caucasian employees while excluding talented women and/or persons of color from obtaining similar opportunities *necessarily* means, by default, that certain groups are being favored over others. Helping managers broaden their perspectives on these issues can minimize the "pressure" some may feel when implementing diversity-related business objectives.

*Without these groups present in the workplace – and contributing meaningfully – employers risk losing their competitive edge.*

*Continued on page 9*

**B. Distinguish quotas and goals.**

It is critical that managers understand that Title VII does *not* permit an employer to maintain a rigid “quota” system whereby a certain number of “slots” are reserved or “set aside” for women and/or employees of color. Rather, managers should be encouraged to shift their paradigmatic thinking from the “old way” of thinking about affirmative action to the “new” way of thinking about diversity. Diversity requires managers to consider the goal – not tied to a specific number or percentage – that diverse employees should be represented and included throughout every level of an organization.

selected candidate to be the “most” qualified, it does require the differences not to be “so superior” that a reasonable person would not understand how the selected candidate received the position over the plaintiff.<sup>4</sup>

**D. Be clear that employment decisions are not based on diversity goals.** Despite the Supreme Court’s *Grutter v. Bollinger*<sup>5</sup> decision, the current status of Title VII law makes clear that Courts, in the context of cases covered by this article, find it *unlawful* to specifically link an employer’s diversity goals with a *specific* employment decision. Consequently, employers must be certain that managers making employment decisions are equipped to explain the legitimate, nondiscriminatory reasons for the employment decision and specifically articulate that they did *not* rely on the company’s diversity efforts when making the decision at issue.

**E. Be certain that policies encouraging affinity groups and other networking groups contain language allowing all employees sharing interests consistent with the group’s purpose to participate in meetings and events.** Ensure that membership in affinity groups is inclusive for all employees – irrespective of eth-

nic identity – who wish to participate in achieving the goals identified by a particular affinity group’s charter or statement of purpose.

**F. To assist employees and managers effectively manage and engage diversity issues that necessarily arise in the workplace, prudent employers should train employees and managers about their policies regarding inclusion, dispel any misperceptions that diversity means preferential treatment for certain groups and reinforce the importance of reporting concerns to the appropriate management, executive and human resources professional.**

\*\*\*

*Mr. Barrow is an employment and labor attorney with the law firm of Littler Mendelson. He advises and represents employers in a broad range of employment law matters, as well as litigation avoidance and disputes involving non-competition agreements. He also serves as Co-Chair of the firm’s Diversity & Inclusion Council and is the former Co-Chair of the National Bar Association’s Diversity Task Force. He can be reached at 214.880.8166 or [fbarrow@littler.com](mailto:fbarrow@littler.com)*

(Footnotes)

- 1 US Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009*.
- 2 Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia’s Terry College of Business Projects.
- 3 Witek Combs, January 25, 2007, “Buying Power” (Estimation provided based on projected 2011 census.)
- 4 *Nowak v. International Truck and Engine Corp.*, 406 F. Supp. 2d 954, 965-66 (N.D. Ill. 2005).
- 5 539 U.S. 306 (2003).

*Diversity requires managers to consider the goal ...that diverse employees should be represented and included throughout every level of an organization.*

**C. Ensure candidates meet job qualifications.** Courts appear more suspect of the relationship between a particular diversity-related business objective or plan when the successful candidate is not qualified for the position and/or the employer deviated from its selection policy. Consequently, managers making employment decisions must ensure the candidates are qualified for the position. While the law does not require the



**Songhai Sledge, Brenda Homan, Tracy Acosta Spore, Frederick Barrow, Liz Rogers, and Donna Hetherington**

# 2009 Dallas ALA Chapter Annual Golf And Casino Event October 29, 2009

by Bart Allin

We had our Annual Golf & Casino Event on October 29, 2009 this year. It was a great success despite the challenges we had with the rain and cooler temperatures. This year we were all gathered at The Golf Club of Dallas once again for an afternoon of Golf and Casino games. Thank you to all of our Business Partners who supported this event. Without your support, events like this would not be possible nor would many of the other events we have throughout the year. It was a good time had by all. The weather did force us to start the Casino a bit earlier as well as the Chair massages, but this was a good thing I was told. Once we started the Golf Event the rain had stopped and the sun even poked its head out a couple of times. I guess it was just meant to be!

Thank you to all of our members / guests that came out to support us on that questionable day. We had some new members that came out for their first time and I believe that they were surprised at how well everything played out. Please join me in thanking our Presenting Sponsors: Current Business Technologies, Inc, Miller Office Interiors, Preferred Office Products and Working Plants. Without the help from them, this annual task would be overwhelming for our little group on the Golf & Casino Committee.

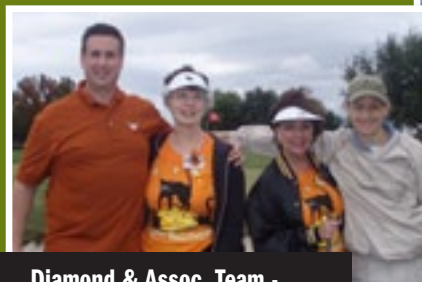
Once again I say thank you to all of our Members & Business Partners!!



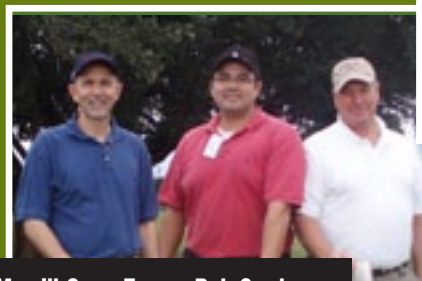
**DTI Team - Richard Davenport, Herb Allbritton, Joel Edwards & Glen Pryor**



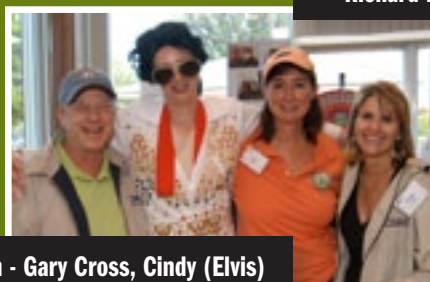
**Crescent Real Estate Equities, Inc. Team - Steven Noss, Mike Taylor & Chong Johnson**



**Diamond & Assoc. Team - Glenn Diamond, Sandra Reinhardt, Deb Carlton & Steve Mall**



**Merrill Corp. Team - Bob Gordon, Richard Lopez & Loren Sauter**



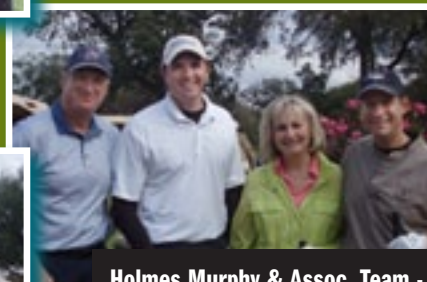
**CBT Team - Gary Cross, Cindy (Elvis) Stanley, Shari Doidge & Barbara Kuhlke**



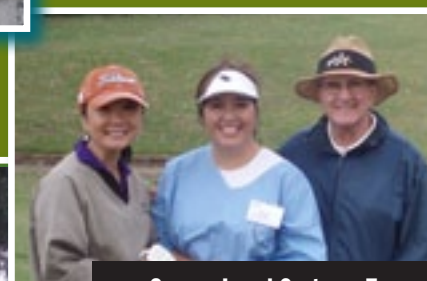
**ProStar Team - Bill Robinson, Randy Parks, Bart Allin, Bill Kuhlke & James Engel**



**IKON Team - Chuck Beago, Ric Cruz, Gary Schwartz & Tony Lansford**



**Holmes Murphy & Assoc. Team - Tom Helfand, Patty Stewart & Travis Dent**



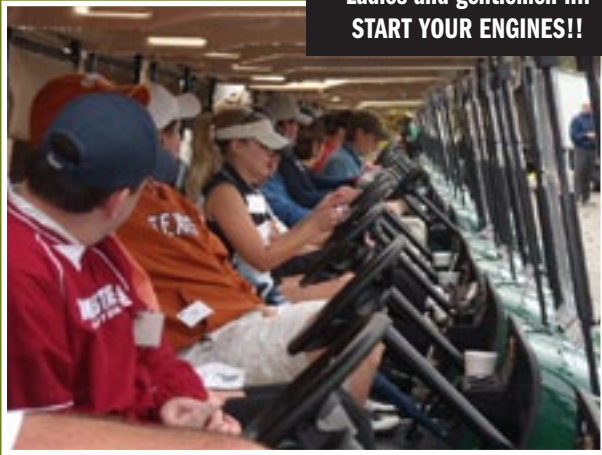
**Omega Legal Systems Team - Maria Engett, Denise Hall-Leach & Ross Robertson**



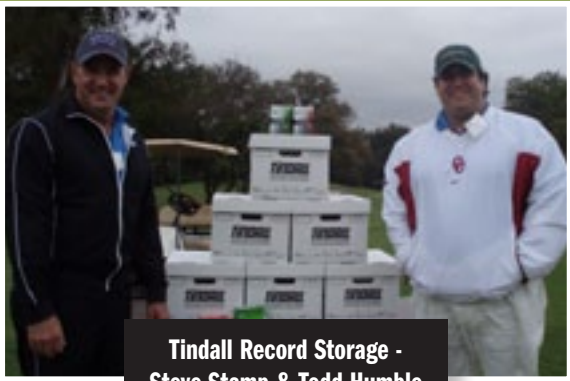
**Bill & Barbara Kuhlke, Ken Danforth & Elizabeth Christman**

Continued on page 11

**Ladies and gentlemen ....  
START YOUR ENGINES!!**



**Attorney Resources -  
Tracy Bell & Sheila Garrett**



**Tindall Record Storage -  
Steve Stamp & Todd Humble**



**DTI - Daryl Lanier**



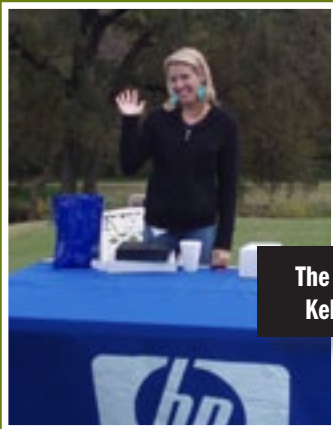
**Geiger International - Virginia Wilson  
Action Shred - Masha Pavlov**



**Corporate Care - Carol Tremayne & Eileen Petersen  
Océ - Tracy Nguyen**



**Tom Stewart and Tracy Dodd  
of Legal Network**



**The Verity Group -  
Kelsey Zemanek**

**Greenwood Office - Becky Cook with Denise Noss & Shari Doidge**



**Eileen Petersen, Sandi Corcoran & Terri Porter**



**1st Place Team - Special Counsel - Scott Bruce, Elizabeth Christman, Ken Danforth & Barbara Kuhlke (not pictured)**



**Bart Allin and Denise Noss present Sponsor Award to Working Plants - Tim Simmons & Chris Smith**



**2nd Place Team - DTI - Richard Davenport, Bart Allin, Joel Edwards & Glenn Pryor**

**Presenting Sponsor Award - Current Business Technologies - Tim Cislo, Mike Bailey & Gary Cross**



**Last Place Team - CBT - Tim Cislo, Annette Schlaf, Mike Bailey & Brooks Gould**



# An Amazing Amount of Kindness

*In October, ALA chapters across the country came together and participated in the 11th Annual ALA Community Challenge Weekend (“CCW”).*

This year, the Dallas Chapter ALA joined in this global effort and partnered with **The Stewpot** and its partner agency, **The Second Chance Café**, by providing community service assistance through time and monetary donations. It has been said that strength comes in numbers and this year was no exception!

On October 16th, 17 volunteers set aside their Blackberry’s and cell phones, hopped on a bus, and made their way to the **Second Chance Café at the Bridge** to help serve the Dinner meal service to individuals in need. Not only were we able to help an organization that depends on volunteers to make meal services possible, but we also enjoyed interacting with everyone we met and walked away with a better understanding of what the **Second Chance Café** offers and the important service it provides in the community.

Our virtual volunteers also made a significant contribution to the CCW through their generous donations. With their help the Dallas Chapter collected over \$1,200 to be used for the purchase of **The Stewpot’s Wish List** items, as well as for the purchase of over 40 art canvases for **The Stewpot Art Program**. With the goal of “getting the most bang for the buck”, Hilary Childress and I launched a shopping expedition to our local Target and Hobby Lobby. We approached this challenge with a single goal – purchasing, and delivering to **The Stewpot**, basic necessities and items which would have a meaningful impact to individuals in need.

A few months ago, a good friend told me that being involved in the ALA Community Service Committee would be a meaningful life experience - she was right. The kindness and generosity of the 33 chapter members, business partners, friends and family who took part in the CCW was truly amazing and something I will never forget. Hilary and I extend our thanks and appreciation to each of you for your many contributions and for your ongoing spirit of community.



Volunteer Orientation presented by  
Jean Jones,  
Stewpot Director of Volunteers



Richard Cantrell arrived  
ready for action!



Hilary Childress and Liz Rogers  
loading up at Target



Pam Bishop, Sandra Reinhardt, Richard Cantrell, Harry Storey,  
Greg Kosan, Deb Strube, Nicola Noel, Oma Conn, Hilary Childress,  
Alecia McDowra, Barbara Kuhlke, Linda Phillips, Scott Bruce,  
Nita Starnes, Liz Rogers, and Becky Longmore

*The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others.*

DeAnn Hollis

# You want me to do what?



By Oma Conn

## *I want you to do something you may not think possible!*

I want you to do something you may not think possible! I want you to consider joining me in a leadership role in our Chapter next year. I remember a few years ago (okay, many years ago) I was asked the very same thing. It was shortly after I joined the Dallas Chapter...right after I joined I had a call from a member (who also now happens to be a friend) and I was asked if I would co-chair the Human Resources Section for the upcoming year. My very first thoughts were "But I just joined. I don't know anyone. I don't know what to do". I found out that by serving the Chapter, I was given the opportunity to meet many new peers who have been a wealth of knowledge and a safe and secure platform in which to grow and succeed. Overall I have received much more than I have given.

Now I wouldn't say there is nothing to it, but I will tell you that I have learned and have grown from each experience. Each time I "signed up", after my term was up, I certainly felt I came out the winner. As I prepare to take on the leadership challenge of President, I am hoping that you will join me on this adventure. It isn't what you know now; it is what you will know at the end of our journey together.

We are on a fiscal year, so the new term does not start until April 1, 2010. We will have a transition meeting prior to April 1st where all of the section and committee chairs will meet together to plan for the upcoming year, so we want to have our chairs and co-chairs in place shortly after the first of the year.

If you are currently serving, we look forward to your continuing participation and expertise. If you have not volunteered, there are a lot of opportunities that would be a great place to start! They include:

### **Committees**

**Business Partners**

**Education**

**Legal Community Relations**

**Membership**

**Mentoring**

**Newsletter**

**Social**

**Survey**

**Community Service**

### **Special Committees**

**Golf Outing**

**Web Site**

### **Sections**

**Facilities**

**Financial Management & Systems  
Technology**

**Human Resources**

**Multi-Office Firm**

**North Dallas**

**Principal Administrators**

If you are interested in serving on the Board, please contact Barbara Kuhlke. If you are interested in serving as a co-chair, please contact Barbara or me. We look forward to hearing from you.

# GENERAL MEETING RECAP

November 12, 2009



Jamy Sullivan

At the November General Meeting, Jamy Sullivan, Regional Vice President of Robert Half Legal, examined the types of management mistakes companies have made in past recessions and provided tips for avoiding common pitfalls. Attendees learned how to effectively communicate with their teams during times of change and gain insight into low-cost incentives that can improve morale and productivity levels. They also received advice on how to create a strong, efficient team that's prepared for the inevitable upturn.

## Seven Most Common Mistakes Managers Make in an Uncertain Economy

By Jamy Sullivan

Managing employees is never easy, but it poses a particular challenge when teams are lean and the economy is uncertain. While some of the obstacles businesses are grappling with may be new, the strategies they can use to foster teamwork in a troubled economy are not, according to staffing firm Robert Half Legal.

"In today's business environment, supervisors are under pressure to accomplish more with fewer resources," said Max Messmer, chairman and CEO of Robert Half International. "The good news is that a great deal can be learned from the strategies managers have employed in past downturns -- both those that worked well and those that missed the mark."

Following are seven of the most prevalent mistakes managers make in a downturn and how to avoid them, according to Robert Half:

### Thinking your staff can't handle the truth.

If you haven't before, now is the time to treat employees like business partners. Talking openly about the effect of the downturn on your firm can help staff members feel they have some measure of control. Discuss issues that arose during the last business slowdown. How did things turn around? What was learned from that experience?

### Blaming those at the top.

If you're a middle manager who has to deliver bad news, you may be inclined to tell employees that you

would have done things differently, but the choice wasn't yours. While this may temporarily take the heat off of you, it sends the message that you are out of sync with the company's leaders, which may be disconcerting to staff. Instead, present changes and the reasons behind them, including how your firm will persevere.

### Feeling people are lucky just to have a job.

It may be true that many employees feel fortunate to have a stable position, but this doesn't mean managers can ignore staff members' desire for positive recognition and career support. Top performers, in particular, require extra attention; not only are their contributions especially critical now, but they are always attractive targets for competitors.

### Not asking for employees' help in expanding client relationships.

Ask staff members to think about things they can do to help achieve business goals without sacrificing productivity. You may be pleased to discover how resourceful they are. When appropriate, involve your



Continued from page 15

team in efforts to generate new business. This can mean expanding relationships with existing clients as well as identifying and pursuing new prospects.

### **Making work “mission impossible.”**

Hiring freezes and tighter budgets may mean that one person is doing the work of two or more people. If this is the case, help your employees identify which projects are mission-critical. Delegate remaining tasks, bringing in temporary professionals if necessary, or put these items on hold. This will help you avoid overwhelming your staff.

### **Shifting the focus from the front lines.**

Client service matters even more when times are tough. Are you doing everything possible to make sure your front-line professionals have the right attitude and send the right messages? If these employees come across as indifferent or inexperienced, you could lose both prospective and existing customers.

### **Waiting to try new things.**

Even in uncertain times, playing it safe can backfire. If you have a promising new service offering or client niche you want to pursue, don't wait for a turnaround to act. By taking well-calculated risks, you can get a jump on competitors and possibly carve out an additional revenue stream.

Attendees came away from Ms. Sullivan's presentation with valuable guidelines for effectively communicating with teams during these difficult economic times and providing low-cost incentives to improve morale and productivity levels. Contact Jamy Sullivan or any of the Robert Half team to obtain a copy of the full publication,

### **“30 Most Common Mistakes Managers Make in an Uncertain Economy.”**

Jamy J. Sullivan, JD, is the Regional Vice President for **ROBERT HALF LEGAL**. She can be reached at 214.999.0909 ext. 41141 or [jamy.sullivan@rhi.com](mailto:jamy.sullivan@rhi.com)



## **ALA Dallas Chapter General Meeting and Managing Partners Luncheon** **Thursday, January 14, 2010**

### **The ALA Dallas Chapter General Meeting and Managing Partners Luncheon is**



**Phil Puckett**

scheduled at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 14, 2010 at the Tower Club, 1601 Elm Street, Dallas, Texas. Tower Club garage parking will be validated. Note the date to your managing partner's calendar now to ensure his or her attendance at the Luncheon!



**Jeff Ellerman**

**Phil Puckett**, Executive V.P., and **Jeff Ellerman**, Vice Chairman, of CB Richard Ellis, Inc., will provide an office market update using the latest in visual technology, commonly referred to as the **“DASHBOARD Market Update.”**

This technology, founded in Dallas, will soon be rolled out to other major U.S. markets. The presentation will provide invaluable information for those who are considering office relocations, as well as a fascinating update regarding the effect of current economic conditions on the local business real estate market.

RSVP meeting attendance confirmation no later than **Monday, January 4, 2010** to [nita\\_starnes@yahoo.com](mailto:nita_starnes@yahoo.com).

“... a dream of a nation where all our gifts and resources are not held for ourselves alone but as instruments of service for the rest of humanity.”

~ Martin Luther King Jr

# The Gift that Keeps on Giving



By Kim Williams

*Eleven years ago, I ventured into the world of human resources. I was excited and scared at the same time!*

As I began this incredible journey, I was extremely fortunate to have a wonderful boss, Pam Breier, who has become not only a close friend but also my mentor. For many years I watched Pam, Oma, Barbara and others grow in their careers and have grown as volunteers for ALA. So it was no surprise, in my first year, when Pam suggested I join the Dallas HR Association and volunteer to help. I was extremely shy at the time and I had no intention of doing anything except attend meetings. I eventually joined and became a volunteer. I soon realized that her suggestion had brought me an abundance of opportunities that I would not have been able to experience outside of a volunteer environment.

So what did I get out of this experience and why should my experiences or the experiences of other volunteers inspire you? Not only have I grown in my career, but have also made numerous friends and formed great working relationships with colleagues across the state of Texas. This year, I had the distinct honor of being elected to serve on the Board of Trustees for the Dallas HR Association, serve as the 68<sup>th</sup> Conference Director for the HR Southwest Conference & Exposition and also the Texas State Council for SHRM.

Two years ago, I joined ALA. I am thrilled to be a part of ALA and have made many new friends. I soon hope to be volunteering in

some capacity, so I may give back to the Chapter. At one time in your life it is likely that you needed a mentor to help you grow, lead and inspire you, either personally or professionally. Every person I have had the opportunity of meeting across the state of Texas as a result of my volunteer efforts has inspired me to grow into the person I am today. There is a Chinese proverb that says: "When someone shares something of value with you and you benefit from it, you have a moral obligation to share it with others." It has been my experience that the more I have been able to share of myself, the more enriched I have become. Whether that community is your city, your work or the organizations you belong to, it is important to take part and share.

Each week many of us watch "Extreme Home Makeover" on TV. There are hundreds of volunteers on each episode. Over the past few weeks volunteers are being asked "Why do you do this?" They all have the same answer. "Because at one time I needed help and someone helped me. So I want to give back." How do they accomplish building a house in 7 days? VOLUNTEERS! Each volunteer brings his or her own expertise to make the impossible happen.

When I was hired at SettlePou, I knew I wouldn't have all the answers to all the tasks I would be doing on a daily basis. And while that was sort of scary, I did know I

had lots of colleagues that would help me if I had a question. The only way I had that was because of the friendships and professional relationships that I had built up as a result of my volunteering. So I ask you to be open to the idea of participating in your professional association. Donate your time to efforts that you feel connected with, in some way, in the local chapter and community.

What experiences are you missing because you think you don't have the time to volunteer? The next generation needs strong mentors in order for our companies to stay strong and competitive. We cannot afford to miss out on opportunities to grow in knowledge, to acquire new mentors or to develop new friendships.

*Aldous Huxley said  
"Experience is not  
what happens to  
you, it is what you do  
with what happens  
to you." Give the gift  
of volunteering and  
receive the experience  
of a lifetime!*

## Corporate Culture – All Important in Employee Retention

*...investing in your human capital doesn't have to cost much, but it will pay huge dividends in the future.*

With the unemployment rate at 9.5%, talk of layoffs, and the closing of numerous businesses, it's easy to see why many organizations are tightening their reins. However, it is important to maintain, or create, an atmosphere of security, flexibility, and contentment for employees... especially during an economic crisis. The temptation may be to put more emphasis on the bottom line than on those that create the bottom line. This could create more cost than you think. For example, turnover rates for 2008 (both voluntary and involuntary) averaged 18.7%. According to Watson Wyatt, total turnover costs including hard dollars and lost productivity are approximately 48% – 61% of salary. If a company has 60 employees with an average salary of \$40,000, that could mean a cost of \$215,424 to \$273,768!

So how does an employer stay competitive without spending a lot of money? There are several things employers can do that cost little, but can go a long way in eye of an employee.

### **Communicate.**

Communication creates a sense of security for an employee. Not only communication about operations and product offerings, but culturally and structurally as well. If people feel that they have a good understanding of where the company is going and how it is going to get there, they are generally more connected and invested in it. Communication creates a purpose and meaning to come and work every day.

### **Be flexible.**

Increasing flex-time or being more flexible with work schedules is a great way to add value in the eye of the employee. Being aware of the scheduling needs of employees and then trying to meet those needs creates a loyalty and appreciation to your company.

### **Recognition and Rewards.**

Recognizing a job well done or rewarding employees that have just finished a project shows that they are appreciated for their efforts and it is noticed. Rewards could be anything from an extra vacation day or a gift card to a restaurant. They don't have to cost a lot to have a significant impact.

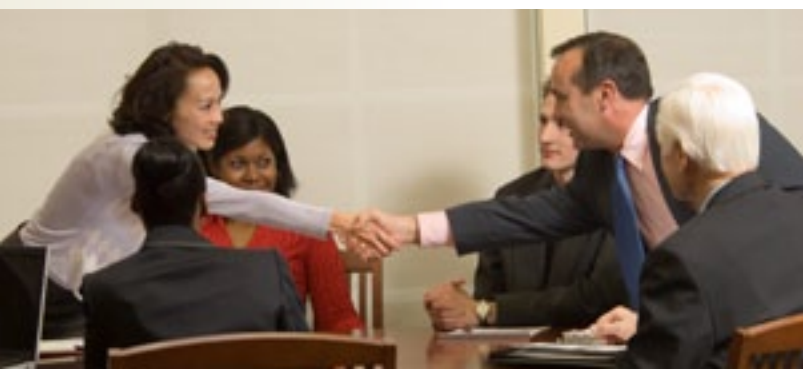
These are just a few ways employers can keep their employees productive, content, and loyal through wage freezes or layoffs. Eventually the economy will turn and the last thing an employer needs to worry about when this happens is finding good employees. Remember, investing in your human capital doesn't have to cost much, but it will pay huge dividends in the future.

### **About the Author: Jamie Harrell**

*Jamie is an integral part of Staff One, joining the team in 2009. She holds an MBA from Oklahoma State University, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management. Jamie has an extensive background in recruiting, working for a local Oklahoma recruiter prior to joining Staff One. She has experience in HR with additional experience in management, and she now delivers strategic HR to approximately 60 client companies and over 1000 employees from Tulsa to OKC.*

*She has a gift of encouraging and motivating those around her with her enthusiasm and positive attitude. Her energetic, extroverted personality is fundamental in creating the long-term client relationships on which Staff One prides itself.*

*For more information about how Staff One can help your organization, contact Dan McCarthy, dan.mccarthy@staffone.com, 214.461.1135.*



# In Celebration of Certification

## *ALA Members Share Reasons for Attaining the CLM<sup>SM</sup>*

By Sue Powers

In today's rapidly changing economy, it might help to know that certification is one commodity whose value is increasing. From personal satisfaction to savings on liability insurance, the Association of Legal Administrators' (ALA) Certified Legal Manager (CLM)<sup>SM</sup> designation is today helping in ways not imagined when many CLMs first made the decision to seek certification.

Consider its advantage in the job market. The CLM designation has shown its power to raise a résumé out of the slush pile and into the job. When **Fran Puntillo**, Office Manager at Weiner Lesniak LLP, was looking for her present job, the managing partner was about to offer the position to someone else when her résumé hit his desk. He decided he had to meet the person who "after being in the profession for so many years (*ouch – that hurt*) went back to school to prepare for a certification exam." After reviewing ALA's material on their CLM program that she so wisely thought to bring with her, he offered her the job the next day.

*...certification has proven it offers benefits, opportunities, and added value to the work (and even personal life) of many CLMs.*

**Ray Lightell, Jr.**, Chief Operating Officer at Galloway Johnson Tompkins Burr & Smith was able to secure a prominent position with a major New Orleans law firm within six months of becoming

certified. "It added credibility to my résumé and was one of the deciding factors in my selection."

And Executive Director of Traskbritt PC, **Charly Doe**, believes her CLM credential (and her sparkling personality) separated her from the other two finalists vying for her current position. "All three of us were experienced and well educated."

In fact, certified legal administrators give their CLM status credit for any number of opportunities and benefits they enjoy today. Particularly when so many administrators come from varying backgrounds, such as CPAs, IT managers, and even some from the medical field, the CLM designation has proven its ability to educate, empower, and validate.

As in the case of **Louis Haley**, Administrator at Walsh Colucci Lubeley Emrich & Walsh PC, who was a mini-computer and LAN systems analyst for the first 10 years of his career. He believes the process to attain his CLM certification gave him the education he needed to move into legal management. "I believed I would be a more credible manager if I gained experience in the various competencies and attained the certified status." Haley credits his CLM credentials for helping him throughout his law firm career, which has taken him from a Washington, D.C., firm to a large international firm, and back again to a smaller local firm.

Former registered nurse **Debra Holland** turned legal administrator for Eckenrode Maupin, Attorneys at Law, believes her certification proved her "competence in the legal field" and

offered "validation" to her career. CPA **Barbara Schafer**, Executive Director of Ogden Murphy Wallace, PLLC, says her CLM designation provided validation of her role as a principal administrator. And for **Mike Brodfuehrer**, who had a background in finance and manufacturing and is now the Firm Administrator at Woodward Hobson & Fulton, LLP, certification was a "barometer" that measured his competence in the legal industry.

The value so many place on the CLM designation comes in part from the fact that earning the CLM designation is a hard won victory. As anyone who has gone through the CLM certification process will tell you, ALA's program is a rigorous one. Administrators must meet strict educational and work experience requirements and pass a comprehensive examination that tests their mastery in *each* of the following areas:

- financial management, accounting and analysis
- human resources management
- office operations management and technology
- legal industry/business management

But certification has proven it offers benefits, opportunities, and added value to the work (and even personal life) of many CLMs. And in a recent CLM survey conducted by ALA, current CLMs, non-certified legal administrators, and managing partners provided some very compelling reasons for seeking certification and a better understanding of the value of the program to the entire legal industry.

### Managing Partners

The Association does not get a great many opportunities to discuss the CLM program with Managing Partners. So when the

*Continued on page 20*

survey asked Managing Partners what the CLM credential best represented to them, the Association listened closely.

Topping their list were three areas of value concerning the CLM credential:

1. Mastery of the fundamental knowledge and skills related to legal management
2. Professional credibility
3. Commitment to the profession

Moreover, all agreed – Managing Partners, CLMs and non-certified legal administrators – that these top three areas best represented the significance of the Certified Legal Manager credential.

*(CLMs) have also told us they now receive greater respect from the partners, are more involved in decision-making and are more often asked for their input.*

### **Current CLMs**

Current CLMs were also posed the question “Why did you choose to obtain the CLM designation?” What emerged were these ten top reasons to pursue certification and commit to the ongoing process of continuing education:

1. Personal satisfaction
2. Enhancement of knowledge and skills
3. Validation of existing knowledge and skills
4. Distinction in the profession
5. Credibility as a professional
6. Advantage in the job market
7. Demonstration of commitment to the profession

8. Demonstration of commitment to a code of professional ethics
9. Enhancement of job security
10. Increased status within the legal community

Over the past eleven years of ALA’s certification program, many CLMs have talked quite enthusiastically about the positive effects of certification on their confidence, self-esteem and pride, so it wasn’t a great surprise that personal satisfaction was rated as the number one benefit of certification. But for one CLM, who hadn’t taken an exam in 25 years when she passed her 100 question certification exam, her reaction was both relief and joy. She now has a new role as an ALA chapter leader, which she owes to having obtained her CLM. One of the goals of ALA’s CLM program is to provide the knowledge and skills that would allow a legal administrator to confidently walk into any mid-size firm and hit the ground running. Thus it has been gratifying to know that many of those who become certified do feel empowered to tackle any situation that might unfold, knowing they have the knowledge, skills and ability to handle it.

Those who achieved certification have also told us they now receive greater respect from the partners, are more involved in decision-making and are more often asked for their input. The respect one CLM received “increased three-fold” from the attorneys he works for; they now come to him as the authority in all areas of their profession. Another CLM, since becoming certified, is used as a “resource to meet the demands for information” in her law firm. Awareness of the CLM designation is increasing, particularly in some parts of North America where ads for legal administrators say “CLM

preferred.” And the news about CLM certification keeps getting better. Discounts on liability insurance are available in many states for firms who employ CLMs ([www.alanet.org/clminsurace.html](http://www.alanet.org/clminsurace.html)).

One CLM impressed her new employer when he received a notice from the firm’s insurance company that it would save money because it hired a CLM. Another reported that she saved her firm about \$14,000 on its professional liability insurance renewal this year, and she expects that savings will continue.

Added another CLM: “The benefits have been many. Recognition by my firm is just one. For me, it has resulted in more confidence in the decisions I make. For my firm, among other things, it has resulted in financial savings on our professional liability insurance. As one member of our management committee pointed out, I am now a profit center.”

For complete information on ALA’s certification program, visit [www.alanet.org/clm](http://www.alanet.org/clm).

*Sue Powers is ALA’s Education Staff Writer and Program Administrator. She is a frequent contributor to ALA News and Legal Management and a published fiction writer.*

*\*CLM<sup>SM</sup> is a service mark of the Association of Legal Administrators*



# New Year's Resolutions

## Planning for a Year of Achievement



**A**re you busy making your New Year Resolutions. Or have you resolved never to make a New Year's resolution ever again.? If the latter, you're not alone. So many people get demoralized when, year after year, they make resolutions that they keep for only a few weeks or maybe even just a few days.

Why is this? After all, we all have the best intentions and the timing (new year, new start) couldn't be better. The problem may lie in the fact that we place a huge amount of pressure on ourselves. During the last week of December and the first week of January, all you hear is, "What're your New Year's resolutions?" "What are you going to work on this year?"

And the focus is on the "what" not the "how." When you are more concerned with the goal you set than on the specifics of how you are going to accomplish it, or even whether it is realistic and achievable, you can set yourself up for failure.

So if you resolve to set successful New Year resolutions, read on. Let's focus on how, this year, you can set yourself up for a year of achievement!

### New Year Resolution Mistakes

There are two common mistakes that people tend to make before they even start to make their New Year resolutions: They think about what they "should" do, rather than what they really want to do. And worse they think in about what they should **stop** doing, rather than what they actually want to achieve. "What should I do this year?" "What should I stop doing?," "What do other people suggest I should work on?"

To be successful at any change, you need to really want it. Unless you take time to consider what it is you really want you (rather than what you **should do** or **should stop** doing) you will invariably end up making a resolution to which you are not entirely committed.

Without commitment, you aren't motivated and after the first setbacks or obstacles you will quit. So the first rule of New Year Resolutions is to only make ones that you are committed to - Don't make a resolution simply because it is "the thing to do", or because someone has told you that you should.

The irony of it is that New Year's resolutions have the potential to be very powerful because they are such a well recognized practice. Everyone knows that everyone else is setting resolutions. And what a great mutual support network that can provide! This external motivation and support, along with your internal motivation - the desire to succeed - is what can make the difference between success and failure.

### Eight Rules for New Year's Resolutions

Our Eight Rules for New Year's Resolutions will help set you up for success right from the start. Inevitably you will come up against challenges and road blocks along the way; however by planning ahead and following these rules, you will be better placed to negotiate these easily, rather than stumble and quit.

#### Rule 1: Commit to Your Resolution

Successful resolutions start with a strong commitment to make a change. To succeed, you must **believe** that you can accomplish what you set out to and that belief is bolstered by the unwavering support you give yourself.

- Choose resolutions that you **really want** to achieve - and make them positive;

*Continued on page 22*

- Announce your resolution to everyone around you - they will help hold you accountable;
- Develop a ceremony to mark the beginning of your commitment - this makes it more "real" and special for you;
- Don't leave your choice of resolution to the last minute - take time to think about your goals. If you don't, you risk reacting to your current environment and missing the big picture;
- Questions to ask yourself to determine if you can take ownership of your resolution include:
  - Is this resolution my idea or someone else's?
  - Does this resolution motivate and invigorate me?
  - Is this resolution sit comfortably with other factors in my life such as my values and long-term plans?
- Remember that there's no reason why your New Year's resolution should take all year to achieve.

**Tip:**

*Imagery is a powerful technique to help you own and commit to your goals or resolutions. Try picturing yourself having attained your goal. How do you feel? How do you look? Where you are, what you're doing? How do others react to you? By visualizing yourself in the position you desire, you can bolster your belief that you can do it and strengthen your motivation.*

**Rule 2: Be Realistic**

The key to achieving goals is continued motivation. If you set the bar too high, you risk failing. Consistently failing at something is profoundly de-motivating (It's no wonder that after a few dismal attempts some people abandon the idea of New Year's resolutions altogether!)

- Consider carefully before setting the same resolution you set last year. If it didn't work then, you need to make sure there is good reason to believe you can achieve it this year? What has changed? Do you have more commitment to make it work? (Be careful, or else

you will end up with a repeat performance, and another failed resolution);

- Aim lower, rather than too high - aim for something that is challenging but that you have a good chance of accomplishing. If there is any doubt, err on the side of caution and expand your goal later if you still want to keep improving; and
- Don't bite off more than you can chew. There is no reason to set more than one or two resolutions. Anymore than that and you divide your focus and energy and lessen your chances of success in any area.

**Rule 3 - Write It Down**

A simple but powerful technique for making your goal real is to put your resolution into writing. There is something inside us that creates more commitment and drive when we take the time to do this. Consider writing it down on pieces of card and keeping it where you'll see it often - on your desk, the fridge, in your wallet.

**Rule 4 - Make a Plan**

This is where so many resolutions fall down. Articulating what you want to achieve is one thing; deciding how to do it is quite another. Don't miss out this step!

- Start by envisioning where you want to be;
- Then work back along your path to where you are today;
- Write down all the milestones you note in between; and
- Decide what you will do to accomplish each of these milestones. You need to know each step and have a plan for what comes next.

**Rule 5 - Be Flexible**

Not everything will work out precisely the way you planned. If you are too rigid in your approach to resolutions the first minor obstacle can throw you off your course completely.

- When creating your plan try to predict some challenges you will face - make a contingency for the ones that have the highest probability and mentally prepare yourself for the others.

Continued from page 22

- Realize that your resolution itself might change along the way as well. That's not failure, it's reality. As your life changes so will your goals, dreams, and desires. Remember Rule 1 (Commit to Your Resolution): If you need to make changes to the goal so you continue to care about it, do so.

**Tip:**

*There is no fixed rule saying that a resolution must be set in January. If your circumstances say it is better to wait until March, then do so. Resolutions and goal setting are a year round activity. Don't get too caught up in the New Year frenzy!*

**Rule 6 - Use a System of Reminders**

It's hard to keep focused on your plan when you have many other commitments, responsibilities, and obligations. The best way to stay on top of your resolution is to develop a formal reminder system.

- Have your written down resolutions visible as many times of the day as possible. Leave reminders at work, at home, in the car, on your calendar, in your briefcase, etc;
- Make sure the planned actions are on your to-do list (perhaps have a special section for them at the top);
- Set up reminders in your desktop calendar or subscribe to an email reminder service; and
- Be as creative as you can to keep being reminded, and so make sure your goals stay in the front of your mind.

**Rule 7 - Track Your Progress**

You won't know how well you are doing unless you keep track of your progress. This is why your detailed plan is so important. You need to know when each milestone is accomplished. The excitement around the little successes will keep you motivated and keep you pushing forwards.

- Use a journal and make an entry regarding your progress regularly;
- Note when you felt particularly pleased with your efforts;
- Note when you felt down or felt like quit-

ting - over time, look for common themes and decide if there is an underlying issue that needs to be addressed;

- Record challenges you faced as well as things that went better than planned;
- Look back at your entries on a regular basis and use your past experiences to shape your attitude as you move forward;
- Ask a friend or family member to call you on pre-defined occasions to discuss your progress.

**Rule 8 - Reward Yourself**

Although knowledge of a job well done can be reward enough, we all enjoy a little treat from time to time. Even the most committed person needs a boost and sometimes that is best accomplished through an external reward.

When you are developing your plan, make a note of a few milestones where you will reward yourself once they are achieved. But spread them out - you want to make sure the rewards remain special and are not too easy to get.

**Key Points**

New Year's resolutions can be a pain or a pleasure. The choice is yours. If it's a pain, you may resolve never to make a resolution again. So resolve to make it a pleasure! The starting point is to focus on something that you really want and are ready to give your commitment to. Do this and you'll be in a great position to stay motivated and be successful!

As you plan your New Year resolutions, apply the Eight Rules to set yourself up for success. And if you are a member of the *Mind Tools Career Excellence Club*, why not come and share your resolutions in the My Life, My Journey, My Goals forum, for extra support and motivation?

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# Save the date!

## Go Green - Renew Online

2010 online membership renewal will open in mid-November. Online renewal is an environmentally friendly renewal option and reduces the Association's printing and postage expenses. For those who prefer, hard copy invoices will be mailed out in late-November. If your contact information has changed and you have not previously notified ALA Headquarters, the **address change form** is a convenient way to provide your updates.

## 2010 Business Partner Expo

Wednesday, March 10, 2010



Pass the word to your favorite Business Partners to contact Nina Scott at **nscott@hensleeschwartz.com** for registration information.

## Lonestar Administrator Newsletter Survey

The mission of the Lonestar Administrator is to provide a publication that educates, communicates and facilitates. Your feedback is important to us as we strive to deliver a newsletter that meets the needs of the Dallas Chapter ALA membership. Please take a few moments to share your comments and input with the newsletter staff. We will use this feedback to shape future newsletters and provide information that is important to you.

- STEP 1:** Before taking the survey you can review past issues of the newsletter here: <http://www.dallasala.org/newsletter.asp> (optional)
- STEP 2:** When you are ready, click this link to take the brief 10-question survey: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/C8PXSLF>
- STEP 3:** After taking the survey, please feel free to share any other comments you may have by sending an e-mail to me at [Tracy.AcostaSpore@tklaw.com](mailto:Tracy.AcostaSpore@tklaw.com) (optional)

*\*Note: The survey deadline is December 31, 2009 at 11:45 PM. The current level of membership for the survey site is limited to 100 responses, so respond early. If you are unable to participate via the survey link, send the responses to the questions to me at the above address.*

# The Lonestar RADAR

Emerging topics of interest to keep on your radar

## Principal Administrator

Preparing for the CLM? Contact Barbara Kuhlke if you are interested in borrowing the Dallas Chapter resources for preparing for the exam. The Chapter has a set of the **CLM In a Flash Cards** and the **CLM Examination Study Guide** available for loan to Chapter members. For more information on the CLM exam, refer to the article in this issue entitled, "*In Celebration of Certification.*"

## Financial Management & Systems Technology

### ALA's Law Firm Financial Management Conference is back in 2010!

The event will be held February 18-20, 2010 at the Carefree Resort & Villas in Carefree, Arizona. Join your peers at ALA's three-day financial management conference specifically tailored for principal administrators and branch office managers from small- to mid-sized firms, controllers, accounting managers and other financial professionals, in addition to those relatively new to the legal industry. The complete brochure and registration information are now available on the web site. For more information visit [www.alanet.org/finance](http://www.alanet.org/finance).

## Human Resources

### The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA):

The EEOC has changed the "*Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law*" poster to incorporate the GINA (Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act) law that went into effect November 21, 2009. The new information must be posted in your workplace by that date. You can download a new .pdf format poster free at [http://www.eeoc.gov/self\\_print\\_poster.pdf](http://www.eeoc.gov/self_print_poster.pdf). You should also review your current policies to make sure they do not violate the new law especially as they relate to your wellness and health programs. Additional information on GINA can be found here: [http://www.chernoffdiamond.com/files/Insights\\_GHW/chernoffdiamond/CD\\_Interim\\_Final\\_Rules\\_GINA\\_102709.pdf](http://www.chernoffdiamond.com/files/Insights_GHW/chernoffdiamond/CD_Interim_Final_Rules_GINA_102709.pdf). If you are unsure which posters or notices you are mandated to display in your establishment, use the Poster Advisor wizard to find out. It is available here: <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/posters.htm>

### House Passes Reform Bill;

**Issue Moves to Senate:** On November 7, the U.S. House of Representatives passed its version of health care reform legislation (H.R. 3962 - "The Affordable Health Care for America Act"). Want to know what it is all about? View H.R. 3962 here: [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111\\_cong\\_bills&docid=f:h3962ih.txt.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&docid=f:h3962ih.txt.pdf)

**Red Flags Rule:** On October 29, 2009 Judge Reggie Walton granted the ABA's motion for summary judgment for declaratory and injunctive relief from the Rule's application to lawyers. What does this mean for your Firm? The FTC will have to appeal the case to force lawyers and law firms to comply with the Red Flags Rule as a "creditor." For more information: <http://legaltimes.typepad.com/blt/2009/10/judge-ftc-cannot-make-lawyers-comply-with-identity-theft-laws.html>

## Dallas Business Journal

In the last issue of the Lonestar Administrator, we shared the great news about some of our member firms and business partners that made the Dallas Business Journal's Best Places to Work award.

Kathy Spiro of **David, Goodman & Madole** shared with us the great news that they were also a recipient of this coveted recognition. In the small category they were #71 of the top 100.

Congratulations on this great achievement!



## Your connection

to knowledge, resources and networking

### Legal Management Resource Center (LMRC)

Do you have a legal management problem, question or issue that you need to resolve? The Legal Management Resource Center (LMRC), created and hosted by the Association of Legal Administrators (ALA), is designed to immediately provide the information you need or to quickly direct you to other resources, most on the Internet, where the knowledge you seek can be found. If you need quick personal assistance, use the LMRC to contact ALA's Management Solutions<sup>SM</sup> Reference Desk, where our expert group of researchers will help you find the answer to your legal management question. <http://thesource.alanet.org>

### ALA Currents

ALA Currents is a subscription-based management news service provided exclusively for members of the Association of Legal Administrators. Delivered to you via e-mail directly to your desktop or from Members Only in [www.alanet.org](http://www.alanet.org), ALA Currents provides the most timely information in the marketplace pertaining to legal management. To subscribe to receive ALA Currents via e-mail on the first and third Thursdays of the month:

- Click on the "Subscribe/Unsubscribe" link in the left navigation panel located here: <http://www.alanet.org/members/currents/index.html>
- Enter your member ID number.
- Enter the e-mail address where you want ALA Currents delivered.
- Click "subscribe." And you are subscribed!

### ALA Management Encyclopedia<sup>SM</sup>

The single-best starting point for research on management topics, such as enhancing profitability, substance abuse, trust accounts, hiring laterals and records management.

<http://www.alaencyclopedia.org>

### Audio Recordings of Past Programs

The following Webinar programs are available on audiotope or CD with written materials package for \$99 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. Order online at <http://events.conferenceplus.com/client/index.php?cmpld=30>, or by phone, call iLinc<sup>TM</sup> at (800) 651-7916.

Date	Seminar
11/11/09	Control Stress Before it Controls You
10/21/09	Stepping Out of the Rubble: Developing a Disaster Recovery Plan that Works
09/23/09	Evolve to Solve: Build Your Business
09/17/08	Building a Better Budget
09/16/09	Strengthen Your Bottom Line with a Well-Built Budget
08/20/09	Law Firm Profitability Enhancement Webinar
08/19/09	Records Management - Finding the Needle in the Haystack and Why It's Important
07/15/09	Alternative Work Arrangements
06/17/09	Strategies for Digging out of the E-Mail Bog
03/11/09	The Better Mousetrap: Strategies for Meeting Associate, Partner and Client Expectations
02/18/09	Leaves of Absence: It's a Spaghetti Maze
01/21/09	Indispensable Legal Technology
09/17/08	Building a Better Budget
06/23/08	Part II: Business Interruption/Disaster Recovery: Protect the Records
06/18/08	Part I: Business Interruption/Disaster Recovery: Protect the Technology
04/23/08	Green Law Firms: Building a Sustainable Future
03/19/08	Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Early Succession Planning
02/20/08	Employment Law Update
02/14/08	Demystifying CLM
01/16/08	Technology Update: Where are we going?
06/20/07	Integrating Laterals: Get Those New Partners & Associates Up to Speed
12/12/07	Managing the "Crowd" - Four Generations in the Law Firm
11/14/07	The Blog... is not a 50's Movie
03/14/07	Why Can't Everybody Just Get Along

## Dallas ALA Job Bank Instructions

The Dallas Chapter ALA Job Bank (DCJB) has been created to place prospective employers in touch with legal administrators seeking employment. Firms may contact Harry Storey ([hstorey@hhdulaw.com](mailto:hstorey@hhdulaw.com)) to discuss potential candidates.

It is important to note that the DCJB will not evaluate or recommend firms or applicants that participate in the DCJB, and that all inquiries are handled in strict confidence.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- The DCJB accepts resumes from members in good standing with the Association of Legal Administrators (ALA). Applicants must be a member of ALA for 90 days to place a resume with the Bank.
- To ensure non-discrimination, resumes in the DCJB are disseminated to any firm making a request. However, the DCJB will take steps to prevent an applicant's resume from being sent to the applicant's current employer.
- Resumes for management positions will not be provided to organizations other than law firms, corporate legal departments or other providers of legal services in the DFW Metroplex area. In no event will a resume

be provided to entities considered to be a vendor, including management consultants and search firms.

### APPLICANT INFORMATION – Job Bank

- Applicants desiring to participate in the Job Bank should submit a resume with cover letter to Harry Storey ([hstorey@hhdulaw.com](mailto:hstorey@hhdulaw.com)). The DCJB will advise the applicant if and when additional copies of the resume are needed.
- Applicants should notify the Chapter when employment is obtained.
- Applicants no longer employed in legal administration who have not accepted a position in conflict with ALA's membership criteria may access the Job Bank for a period not to exceed twelve months.

### EMPLOYER INFORMATION – Job Posting

- Law firms desiring to post openings on the DCJB should contact Harry Storey ([hstorey@hhdulaw.com](mailto:hstorey@hhdulaw.com)).
- A representative of the DCJB may discuss the function, qualifications, and job components of a law firm administrator.
- Firms are requested to notify the Chapter once posted positions are filled.

## Members Only Forum Groups

Check out the Members Only Forum Groups available on the Dallas ALA Chapter Website. This new feature enhances the existing "Bulletin Board" by sending your post to the members via email. You may participate in one or all of the groups listed below.

- Financial
- Human Resources
- Business Partners (*our business partners can participate in this forum and only this forum*)
- Facilities
- Multi-Office
- Technology
- Principal Administrators
- All DALA Members (*everyone by default is a member of this forum and only those authorized by the board can post to this forum group*)

### To Subscribe to a Forum Group:

*Login to the Member's Area – "Forums" – "click here."*

Click into the box to the left of the group's description (a check mark should appear) to participate. Now you're ready to post a topic. Remember, you must be a member of the forum group before you are allowed to post a topic.

### To Post a Topic:

- Click on the group you wish to post a topic
- Select "Post New Topic"
- Type a brief "Subject"
- Type the details of your topic in the "Description" area
- Select "To"

At this point you can select "All Ids" or select individual members.

- Click "Submit"
- Click "Post Topic"

An email will be generated with you as the "Sender."

### To Reply:

As a member of the forum group you will receive an email notification of every new post. You may simply "reply" to the email or login to the Member's Area to post a reply. You must respond through the website if you wish to reply to the entire group.

- Login to the Member's Area – "Forums"
- Click on the group you wish to post a reply
- Click on "View Topic & Responses"
- Enter your response
- Select "Post Reply"

An email will be generated with you as the "Sender."

# The Lonestar ADMINISTRATOR

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Oma Conn

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## Sponsors

*The Metroplex business community supports The Dallas Chapter Association of Legal Administrators in several ways. The support enables the Dallas Chapter to provide Chapter members with educational opportunities, including bi-monthly general meetings and local seminars, as well as offering scholarships to ALA national and regional conferences. The Dallas Chapter appreciates the continued generosity of the Chapter's Business Partners!*

## The Gold Sponsor

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**Robert Half Legal**

**Special Counsel**

**Xerox**

## December 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1 Section Meeting</b> Principal Administrators Noon – Belo Mansion <b>HR Holiday Luncheon</b> Noon – Mattito's	2	<b>3 Dallas Chapter Holiday Luncheon</b> 11:30 The Joule <i>Note: Facilities Section Meeting cancelled</i>	4	5
6	7	<b>8 Section Meeting</b> Multi-Office Noon – Belo Mansion	<b>9 Committee/ Section Chair Holiday Dinner</b>	10	11	12
13	14	<b>15 Section Meeting</b> Financial Mgmt/ Systems Technology Noon – Belo Mansion	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

## January 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	<b>7 Section Meeting</b> Facilities Noon – Belo Mansion	8	9
10	11	<b>12 Section Meeting</b> Multi-Office Noon – Belo Mansion	13	<b>14 Chapter General Meeting &amp; Managing Partners Luncheon</b> 11:30 - City Club	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	<b>25 Board Meeting</b> Tower Club	<b>26 Section Meeting</b> Human Resources Noon – Belo Mansion	27	28	29	30
31						

## February 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	<b>2 Section Meeting</b> Principal Administrators Noon – Belo Mansion	3	<b>4 Section Meeting</b> Facilities Noon – Belo Mansion	5	6
7	8	<b>9 Section Meeting</b> Multi-Office Noon – Belo Mansion	10	11	12	13
14	15	<b>16 Section Meeting</b> Financial Mgmt/ Systems Technology Noon – Belo Mansion	17	18	19	20
				<b>ALA Financial Management Conference</b> Carefree, AZ		
21	<b>22 Board Meeting</b> Tower Club	<b>23 Section Meeting</b> Human Resources Noon – Belo Mansion	24	25	<b>26 Section Meeting</b> North Dallas Noon – TBA	27
28						