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New Jersey Association  
of Legal Administrators

SUMMER / FALL 2012

 A Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators

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**ON THE COVER**

The 2012 Summer Olympics are now a distant memory, but law firms, too, are always trying to reach new heights. Read new ideas in this edition about how your firm can be among the “Gold Medal” winners.

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## GOING FOR THE GOLD (OR PERHAPS, PLATINUM)

BY MARY ELLEN DOLAN

Every couple of years, I look forward to watching both the summer and winter games of the Olympics. Recently, while watching the 2012 London Olympics, I thought about the tremendous accomplishments of the Olympic athletes who represent their country for a chance to “Go for The Gold.” The competition is exciting, and I truly enjoy hearing the compelling and gripping stories about these athletes. We learn that each of them have only one goal in mind—to achieve greatness. For many of the athletes, reaching the Olympics and “going for the gold” has been a goal they have been striving for since childhood. Indeed, going for the gold starts with setting a goal—and my guess is these athletes were very SMART in their approach.

As you already know, ALA provides you with many of the tools you need to achieve your personal and professional goals. As administrators, we must set goals each day to help our firms and staff members soar and achieve gold. Goal setting and strategic planning are the cornerstones of effective firm management, and as we have learned in so many ALA seminars, when setting goals, it is best to use the “SMART” Approach (S=Specific, M=Measureable, A=Attainable, R=Realistic and T=Timely).

With goal setting in mind, I began to think about the upcoming year, and would like to share some of the goals I have set for our chapter as I assume the role of president of the New Jersey Association of Legal Administrators. Each of these “specific” goals follow the SMART approach, and, with help from you, our “team” of outstanding members, we can achieve Gold (or Platinum).

### Business Partners

One of the goals this year is for the Business Partner Relations Committee to spend more time collaborating with our existing and future business partners to determine how we can expand this program. The plan is to work to implement a “Coffee and Connections” breakfast series through which we can learn what we can each do in order to build the strongest “team” possible. As you know, our business partners are an integral part of our team. So often, they go above and beyond for us to help us “achieve” specific initiatives to bring home the “gold.” Through the Business Partner Sponsorship Program, NJALA is able to provide outstanding speakers for our educational programs and scholarships to national and regional conferences. As a member of the NJALA team, please consider our business partners a part of your extended team, because they can be there for you to help you achieve gold in your professional goals.

### Membership

With the help of my fellow team of NJALA administrators, another goal is to increase our membership ranks. This is one area where everyone can help: Share your stories on the benefits of NJALA membership with colleagues, brainstorm with other members on ways to make our organization even better, and collaborate to develop ways to generate interest for potential new members. Let’s find out what our colleagues need from us and encourage them to join NJALA and become a part of our winning “team.” At the end of the year, we can easily “measure” our success through this initiative.

### Participation

We have a very strong team of members in NJALA. However, at any general meeting, only one-third of our team attends. Another goal is to increase participation at our general meetings, workshops, and socials. Working closely with the Education Committee, we hope to “attain” this goal by offering top-notch, “timely” educational sessions so our team can continue their “training.” As a member of our team, please consider joining us one night, especially if it has been a while since you have “practiced.”

Continuing on the theme of participation, over the years our local chapter has demonstrated a true team spirit by participating in ALA’s Annual Awards Program. We have competed for and often won awards for Newsletter Excellence, Bar Relations, Business Partner Relations and Community Challenge, and we consistently earn Platinum in the Presidents Award of Excellence. These awards are a direct result of the dedication, motivation and hard work of our member volunteers. Another goal is to work to get even more of our members involved on various committees so we can continue to thrive as a chapter. If you would like to become a key player on a specific team, consider volunteering. Many times, it only takes an hour or two to assist, but that small amount of time will go a long way to furthering our success. I encourage our members to become part of one of teams and help us continue to shine.

There is a true team spirit amongst the administrators in NJALA, and I must say I am proud to be a part of this team, and honored to serve as your president.

A final word on goal setting: As Abraham Lincoln said, “A goal properly set is halfway reached.” Based on that thought, our chapter is well on its way. Over the coming months, please think of ways you can help our team Go for the Gold!

*Mary Ellen Dolan is the Office Administrator of  
Greenberg Traurig, LLP in Florham Park*



# PRIVACY IN THE WORKPLACE: YOU CAN MONITOR YOUR EMPLOYEES, BUT BE CAUTIOUS!

BY ROBBIN DOLAN, CLM

As the use of technology explodes in the workplace, the need for privacy guidelines has emerged as an important human resource consideration. The lines between personal and professional time often blur as we become more intertwined with our jobs through mobile technology. Advances in social content and the widespread use of social media for business purposes can tempt workers to use it for personal reasons, during company time. The Internet has become an important law firm tool for conducting business and an enticing distraction for employees. For these reasons, law firms should develop privacy policies that protect the firm and the employee.

New technologies are constantly being developed to help employers snoop on employees. In fact, a 2007 survey by the American Management Association revealed that most employers do just that. These employers use video, keystroke, website, and e-mail monitoring to assure their employees are at work, not play. Other employers use GPS devices to monitor drivers' locations, or monitor social websites for mentions of their company name. The monitoring tools are numerous; however, the employer must be cognizant of the risks they run when employing such tools. They must protect both the firm and the employee, through implementation of good policy and training.

There are other means employers use in the course of business that could compromise an employee's privacy. Conducting background checks or credit checks on new employees, drug testing, monitoring telephone calls for quality purposes, HIPAA privacy laws, and social security number protections are just a few of the more common activities that employers must take care performing.

Employers are inclined to monitor these activities for many reasons. Most are concerned with productivity. Others are concerned over litigation and potential regulatory investigations. There have been instances of employees using employer-provided equipment to transmit pornography or to engage in illegal hacking, and most productivity-draining viruses are contracted through employees visiting suspect websites on company time. Therefore, employers have good reason to employ monitoring techniques to protect the firm.

Some employers monitor blogs and social media websites for mention of their company name and to protect from sexual harassment, intellectual property pilfering, and pornography distribution. A recent trend involves employers asking employees for user names and passwords to social media sites like Facebook. Monitoring social media sites, however, is not a recommended undertaking for employers, and New Jersey is in the process of passing a law prohibiting employer access of employee passwords to such sites.

## Potential Privacy Issues

There are many problem situations a law firm might face regarding privacy issues. Most attorneys have laptops or smart phones, where they receive both personal and business-related emails. Staff may do work from home occasionally on their personal computer, linking to their work computer. Every employee uses the Internet for business purposes. Some may surf the web on personal business during their lunch hour. These are many examples where personal activities could be revealed if employers start monitoring these activities, and employee privacy rights could be compromised if clear policies are not enacted.

One of the most common monitoring activities is electronic monitoring. Because the computer and related software are owned by the employer, they have the right to monitor the employee. E-mail systems and firm-provided smartphones are owned by the employer and they therefore have the right to monitor e-mail and text messaging. Employers often believe that if an employee knows they are being monitored, productivity will increase. Technology employees implement software that tracks e-mail transmissions, website visits, and electronic storage of documents. Because personal and professional use of computers and smartphones often mingles, the IT department can be exposed to intensely personal information which they have no business knowing. Although systems are available to discriminate between personal and professional information, often these systems are not employed. Technology personnel may also be tempted to read salacious personal information. Because of these pitfalls, employers need to be careful implementing such systems, and develop comprehensive policies.

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Privacy in the Workplace

(Continued from page 5)

There are other non-electronic activities and information gathering that could result in privacy compromises, such as background checks, drug testing, credit monitoring, medical information and social security numbers. There are recommended steps for employers to take to protect themselves that involve appropriate documentation, signed by the employee or potential employee, that cover the parties involved. Above all, the employer must keep this information confidential.

### Federal and New Jersey Law

There is a dearth of federal and state law on the subject of workplace privacy, therefore employee privacy often remains elusive, and employees lack protection. A few federal laws address potential privacy issues:

- **The Fair Credit Reporting Act.** This act prohibits employers from gaining access to credit reports without the written consent of the employee or prospective new hire.
- **The Electronic Communications Privacy Act.** This act prohibits intentional interception of electronic communications, but allows for employers to access employee voice messages and e-mail provided consent (signed copy of the policy) has been given.
- **The Stored Communications Act.** This act protects against unauthorized gathering of stored data. However, this act will not apply if the employer makes it clear that the employee is being monitored.

A 2010 New Jersey Supreme Court decision, *Stengart v. Loving Care Agency, Inc.*, found that an employee did have a right to the privacy of attorney-client privilege regarding personal e-mails sent and received on her work computer. Stengart was considering suing her employer for discrimination and had been corresponding with her personal attorney while at work. The employer accessed those messages after her employment terminated and refused to give the messages back to Stengart. The Court found that the employer's policy did not give clear notice that personal messages were subject to monitoring, and awarded the messages to Stengart. This case highlights the need for employers to develop clear, concise policies regarding monitoring of electronic communications.

In June, 2012, the New Jersey Assembly unanimously passed a law protecting employee password privacy rights. The law, now before the state senate, prevents employers from asking employees for social network passwords. The best policy for employers is to block access to these sites and not to ask for password information.

### The Best Protection is a Comprehensive Policy

Every firm should have a written, signed policy that addresses the use of the Internet and e-mail, and the potential

for electronic employee monitoring. The policy should be clearly communicated and acknowledged via signature by the employee. The policy should be re-iterated periodically so that misunderstandings are reduced. Training programs are necessary to assure employees are fully aware of the policy.

### Some guidelines employers should use are:

1. Generally, e-mails are the property of the firm and the employer has a right to read all of them, so long as there is a clearly stated and communicated policy. Tell employees they should have no expectation of privacy. This policy should be clearly stated in the personnel manual and reinforced through training.
2. Block social media and other web sites that are not integral to firm business. Do not ask for social media site passwords. This removes a lot of risk to the firm.
3. Make every effort to limit monitoring of personal calls, e-mails and stored documents.
4. File HIPAA-related documents (any documents related to any medical conditions) separately from personnel files, in locked cabinets.
5. Protect all social security numbers by immediately filing related documents in a secure location.
6. Obtain written approval for background checks, and perform these checks after the job offer is accepted and make the acceptance conditional on passing the background check.
7. Notify applicants in writing using a stand-alone document that credit checks will be run, and obtain the applicant's approval in writing.
8. Train, train, train. Not only should all policies be in writing, but they should be clearly stated often.

In conclusion, although the laws are limited in protecting employee's rights when it comes to employer surveillance, firms should act very cautiously when it comes to implementing monitoring systems. Employers don't really want to know about their employees' personal lives, but this information will likely become apparent due to the intermingling of personal and professional lives. Employees will resent monitoring and morale may suffer. Should an employer feel monitoring is necessary, then it should be done with the employee's clear written consent, and training programs should be implemented to periodically remind employees that they are being monitored.

***Robbin M. Dolan, CLM, is the Administrator of  
Laddey, Clark & Ryan, LLP, in Sparta***



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## Save the Dates

### ALA 2012 Regional Conferences & Expos

<b>Region 1</b> Conference & Expo	October 18–20, 2012 MGM Grand at Foxwoods Mashantucket, CT
<b>Region 2</b> Conference & Expo	September 27–29, 2012 Loews Atlanta Atlanta, GA
<b>Region 3</b> Conference & Expo	September 13–15, 2012 The Depot Renaissance Minneapolis, MN
<b>Region 4</b> Conference & Expo	October 4–6, 2012 Sheraton Denver Downtown Denver, CO
<b>Regions 5 &amp; 6</b> Conference & Expo	October 11–13, 2012 Disneyland® Hotel Anaheim, CA

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## INSURANCE FORUM: PROTECTING AGAINST EMPLOYMENT CLAIMS

BY LISA J. CUFFARI, CLM

A diverse workforce enriches the human experience in any industry. Historically, for many members of protected classes, getting in the door and being able to find and keep gainful employment have been huge hurdles. Laws have been passed to make diversity in the workplace the norm, rather than the exception. This is to be applauded in every sense. Yet the current environment has also caught well-meaning employers in a web of regulatory do's and don'ts, and employees are now increasingly seeking recourse through the courts and other agencies for both monetary awards and other internal policy changes at firms and businesses.

### Legislation

Legislation such as the Family Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and the Equal Pay Act provides employees with rights and remedies in the courts. We have witnessed a marked increase in job-related lawsuits and claims, which has reinforced the need for employers to add Employment Practices Liability Insurance, known as "EPLI," to their insurance portfolios. According to the online publication, [www.businessinsurancenow.com](http://www.businessinsurancenow.com), an EPLI policy offers insurance protection against claims and lawsuits that are brought against a business, its officers or directors, or its employees and managers. These policies generally cover employee claims against their employers for:

- Gender, age and other types of discrimination
- Sexual harassment
- Wrongful termination or discipline
- Negligent compensation, promotion or hiring decisions
- Breach of contract for employment
- Emotional distress or mental anguish
- Invasion of privacy
- Libel or slander
- Employee benefits mismanagement

Consider the following. One survey done by Chubb Group of Insurance Companies through a public opinion and market research firm in late 2007 found that 62 percent of U.S. private companies experienced claims related to management/professional liability in the past five years, including employment practices liability. The average cost, including judgments, settlements, fines and legal fees, of an employment practices

liability-related claim or suit *at that time*, was \$63,114.<sup>1</sup>

In June 2012, an Illinois-based towing company was directed to pay \$380,000 to 13 claimants and to "provide other relief" resolving a disability discrimination lawsuit that had been filed by the EEOC in September, 2009, charging that United Road Towing failed to provide reasonable accommodations to a class of employees with disabilities. At issue were its "inflexible medical leave policy" and a practice of terminating employees with disabilities at the end of medical leaves rather than bringing them back to work. The EEOC suit was filed in United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois when a pre-litigation settlement failed.<sup>2</sup>

Law firms are also experiencing an increase in employment discrimination suits, according to the on-line publication *JD Journal*. On July 3, 2012, it reported that, according to the EEOC, the number of claims filed against law firms increased 8 percent from 2010 to 2011.<sup>3</sup>

In its Employment Discrimination Report blog, Fox Rothschild's Richard Cohen reports that Kelley Drye & Warren recently settled an "age-ism" lawsuit filed by a long-term partner seeking back pay. As part of the settlement, the firm agreed to end its policy of de-equitizing partners after age 70. The partner plaintiff also received an award in excess of \$500,000.00.<sup>4</sup>

Further, the Washington, D.C., firm James E. Brown & Associates is now facing charges for pregnancy discrimination by a potential associate attorney, who claimed in February of this year that the firm rescinded her job offer after she informed them she was pregnant. No word yet on the outcome of this claim. Patton Boggs' D.C. office has faced a lawsuit alleging sexual harassment.

### Employment Practices Liability Insurance

Certainly having clear and equally-enforced personnel policies

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.hrcare.com/article.aspx/621/1913/Survey>. July 1, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.hrcare.com/article.aspx/907/2734/>. June 27, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.jdjournal.com/2012/07/03>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://employmentdiscrimination.foxrothschild.com/2012/07/articles/>. July 2, 2012.

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## Insurance Forum

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at your firm will provide the first line of defense against both the number and severity of employment-related claims. Additional risk management is found by having EPLI coverage for your company. There are, of course, certain things of which to be aware in obtaining this type of insurance.

EPLI policies are written on a claims-made basis. Unless the insurer specifically offers coverage for earlier claims, this generally means that the event leading to a claim must occur on or after the date of commencement of the policy. Watch, too, whether the policy contains provisions that reduce the limits of liability by the cost of legal defense, and allow legal defense costs to be applied against the deductible. Seek an endorsement that places these claim expenses over and above the limits of liability. Some policies allow you to choose your own defense counsel. A typical deductible for each claim is \$5,000.00.

The cost of EPLI coverage to your firm will depend on various factors, such as the number of employees, type of business, financial strength of the firm, and prior risk history. Coverage limits can range from \$1 million to \$25 million. In addition, when applying for coverage, the insurer may ask questions about your firm's personnel policies as well as regarding any anticipated change in business operations, mergers, layoffs, or bankruptcy during the coverage period and, historically, how many employees were involuntarily and voluntarily terminated over the past 12 months.

To provide the best coverage, the EPLI policy should contain a broad definition of who is insured, and should include full-time and part-time employees, all directors and officers. In addition, the definition of "wrongful employment practice" should include wrongful termination, sexual harassment or other unlawful act in the work place, violations of federal, state, local or common laws concerning employment or discrimination in employment, employment-related misrepresentation, wrongful deprivation of career opportunities, negligent evaluation of employees, failure to adopt adequate employment policies, defamation, and retaliation against employees. Also make sure there are no exclusions for retaliatory claims.

Employment litigation is serious business in today's world. The American Bar Association has endorsed a Chubb policy, ABA Employers Edge EPLI for Law Firms, which was developed in partnership with the American Bar Insurance Plans Consultants, Inc. (ABI). The ABA Employers Edge policy, according to Chubb, provides broad coverage features meeting the needs of the law firm community. The Employers Edge policy includes coverage for claims by partners and claims for failure to make partner, as well as third-party coverage for claims for harassment or discrimination brought by clients or other third parties.<sup>5</sup> Chubb also provides risk management services to its policyholders.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.chubb.com>

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# What's New at the NJALA?

**Come and Visit  
Our Dynamic Website**

*[www.njala.net](http://www.njala.net)*

The NJALA website provides many resources to our members:

- Obtain the most current information on meetings and events
- Obtain contact information for our business partner sponsors
- Look up member information
- Update your contact information and photo
- Print a membership directory
- Post job openings
- Read the *Jer-Z-Journal* online

Visit us at  
*[www.njala.net](http://www.njala.net)*  
today!



## LEADING THE TEAM WITH CLI

BY AUDREY SERBAN

Every year, Chapter Leadership Institute (CLI) gathers ALA chapter leaders together from across the nation and around the world in one venue to share important information, to discuss current events, and to address issues key to chapter success. On June 21<sup>st</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup> of this year, I had the pleasure of sharing my CLI experience with Mary Ellen Dolan (NJALA President, 2012-2013), Mary Beth Donoghue (Trustee), and Jackie Pampinella (Trustee) in Snowbird, Utah. We flew out of Newark Liberty Airport where the temperature was about 104 degrees, and it seemed like it would be that way forever. We arrived in Salt Lake City, where it was about 85 degrees and we were surrounded by beautiful mountains. This year, the intense two-day program reinforced the theme “You Make the Difference.”

The program began with the keynote speaker, Steve Gilliland, who is one of the most in-demand and top-rated speakers in North America. His motto is, “If you take care of people, the business will follow.” His book, *Enjoy The Ride™*, has been on the publisher’s best seller list for five consecutive years. His session “Making a Difference,” provided us with lots of laughs and useful tools that we could put into practice both at work and in our private lives. Mary Ellen Dolan attended “Constructing a Chapter Communications Plan,” presented by chapter representatives. That program provided Mary Ellen with tools to create a communication plan for members and business partners. Mary Beth Donoghue attended “Coaching and Mentoring Future Leaders,” presented by Paula Barnes and Janine Book (Region I Director). In this session, chapter officers discussed the difference between “coaching” and “mentoring,” and the challenges many chapters face in cultivating future leaders. Jackie Pampinella, Chair of this year’s NJALA Business Partner Expo, appropriately chose “Mutual Respect = Mutual Rewards: Building Strong Relationships with Business Partners.” In this session, chapter leaders shared building blocks and best practices for establishing and maintaining

effective business partner relationships. No chapter, ours included, can be successful without our business partners.

“Beyond the ABCs: Leaders Making a Difference in Education” was the session I choose to attend in my role this year as Vice President/Programs. It was incredibly informative, and I found brainstorming with other chapter leaders especially helpful. I realized then that we are very fortunate that we have a budget for speakers, since many other chapters had a modest one or none at all. I came away very excited to create the best educational program I could, and to put our existing budget to good use.

This was the second CLI conference I attended, and I walked away just as energized as from the first time. It was a great opportunity to meet members of the ALA board, regional leadership teams, and headquarters staff, and to network with other chapter leaders. Throughout the weekend we all attended additional sessions and learned from other chapter leaders how to make our officers and chapter run even more effectively for the benefit of all our NJALA members. We hope to incorporate some of these new ideas in

the upcoming 2012-2013 chapter year.

Now, you may be asking, “How can I make a difference within the NJALA?” Well, here are a couple of suggestions. First, I cannot stress enough how much we depend on our business partners’ support. We are all very busy in our daily roles; however, please take some time to either speak to or meet with our business partners if approached. Trust me, a couple of minutes to listen to what they have to offer will go a long way in maintaining their relationship with the NJALA. Anytime I am looking for a new vendor I always look on our website to see who our business partners are.



Mary Beth Donoghue, Mary Ellen Dolan, Jackie Pampinella and Audrey Serban at CLI

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## HOOPSTER, MARKETER, ATTORNEY, COO

BY DON PIERMONT, PHR

You might be able to find a better-rounded individual than one of NJALA's newest board members, Mitch Rait, but you would have to look quite hard!

The Chief Operating Officer of Budd Lerner has degrees from New York University's Stern School of Business and St. John's University School of Law. His interest in labor law was influenced by his labor law professor at St. John's, and during his third year of law school, he interned at the New York City Office of Collective Bargaining.

While a law student, Mitch played basketball in the Law School division of the New York Lawyers Basketball League. His first job was as an associate attorney at the labor and employment boutique law firm of Grotta, Glassman & Hoffman in Roseland. As Mitch put it, "I just packed my New York bags and made the move to New Jersey, literally knowing absolutely no one in New Jersey." [Author's note: This sounds as if he was transplanting himself to a third-world country!]

Two significant things happened after Mitch landed in the Garden State. First, he realized he had a knack for business development. He wrote articles, gave speeches, and, eventually, was asked to head up marketing for everyone at his firm. Law firm marketing in the late 1980s was in its infancy, and Mitch was in on the ground floor, eventually becoming President of the New York Metropolitan Chapter of the Legal Marketing Association.

The second "aha moment" came when Mitch looked to continue playing basketball after his move to New Jersey. He discovered there was no lawyers' league in New Jersey, so he started one. After forming a company, he advertised in the New Jersey Law Journal. The response was great, so he rented gyms, and scheduled referees. There were over twenty teams in the league's first year. He has been the Commissioner of the league for more than twenty years now, and he has successfully tied his basketball interests to his marketing efforts: Much of his business generation comes from his basketball-world contacts.

After seven years at Grotta, Glassman, Mitch was recruited to join Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer as their head of marketing, a position he held from 1995 to 2001. In 2001, he was approached by Budd Lerner, where he initially wore two hats: He practiced employment law while also serving as that firm's Director of Marketing. During his tenure, he progressed from Director of Marketing to Executive Director, and, finally, to Shareholder and Chief Operating Officer.



Mitchell Rait

There are plenty of people who would be very happy with Mitch's career progression, but it seems he didn't have enough to do. The New Jersey Lawyers Basketball League had added a Corporate Basketball League in which major companies throughout the state participated. Mitch was renting six gymnasiums per night but the business outgrew the number of gyms he could rent. The solution was to partner with a lawyer-friend, raise investment capital, and open the state's first Hoop Heaven Basketball Center in Whippany, a 21,000-square foot facility containing

three regulation-size basketball courts, complete with maple hardwood flooring, state-of-the-art stanchions with height-adjustable goals, tempered glass backboards and breakaway rims. In addition, the facility has state-of-the-art electronic scoreboards, a courtside café with tables and chairs, refreshment vending machines, and satellite TV. Not only did the Lawyers and Corporate Basketball Leagues have a place to play their games, but Hoop Heaven has become a regional leader in adult and youth leagues, summer camps, after-school clinics, AAU tournaments, and birthday parties. New Jersey Nets players have frequently been spotted hanging out there as well.

Mitch's Hoop Heaven partner has stopped practicing law to run the day-to-day operations, and the business has opened a 15,000-square foot facility in Bridgewater as well as a 10,000-square foot facility in Waldwick.

Presently, Mitch's days (and nights) are filled with full-time marketing projects to assist other attorneys with their

(Continued on page 12)



## Member Profile

(Continued from page 11)

business development, day-to-day administrative duties and responsibilities, reporting to his firm's Board of Directors, and serving clients and assisting colleagues in employment law-related matters. He sits on the boards of trustees of Covenant House in Newark, the Millburn-Short Hills Chamber of Commerce and, of course, NJALA. He runs an annual Hoop-A-Thon event which raises money to battle Huntington's disease; he sat on the board of the Huntington's Disease Society of New Jersey for eight years, and on the board of Children's Specialized Hospital for seven years

What does the future hold for Mitch? A quiet retirement is probably not an option. Don't be surprised if you see his name associated with the Supreme Court or, possibly, as a member of the next Olympics Committee.

Mitch lives in Livingston with his wife and two daughters.

*Don Piermont was a NJALA member from 2008 through 2012*

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## Insurance Forum

(Continued from page 9)

Whether your firm carries EPLI insurance or not, encouraging your managing partner and human resources staff to attend a loss prevention seminar can reduce the likelihood of a suit down the road. Markel Insurance has launched an HR Care website in conjunction with Jackson Lewis to provide the public and its policyholders with a wealth of information about navigating through federal and state employment laws. See [www.hrcare.com](http://www.hrcare.com) for more information.

I would strongly encourage your firm to seek the advice of insurance professionals in order to be sure you have the coverage needed to defend against the employment claims that have become so much a part of working culture.

*Lisa J. Cuffari, CLM,  
is the Office Administrator of  
Fox and Fox LLP in Livingston*



## MARKETING IS A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT

BY ED MILLER

In the 2008 Olympics, Usain Bolt of Jamaica won the 100 meter gold medal in 9.69 seconds. Since then, the sprinter has gone on to fame and fortune. You may have even seen him pitching Gatorade during the recent Olympic season. In our world of commercial law, this kind of near-instant success can only be dreamed of as our lawyers live their lives in six-minute increments. Unfortunately, expecting instant gratification is unrealistic, and treating marketing like a sprint will most likely not lead to the desired results.

Marketing should be viewed more like a marathon. This approach is certainly not as glamorous as a sprint. After all, who can remember the last Olympic champion in the marathon? For the curious, the men's 2008 Olympic gold medal winner was Samuel Wanjiru of Kenya. He did not get the huge endorsement deals, and his life tragically ended in 2011.

So what is the marathon approach? Simply put, it is the creation of long-term, consistent strategies geared towards achieving specific goals. When it comes to legal marketing, I always break it down into three components. These are the firm as a whole, each individual practice area, and each individual attorney. Each of these areas should be viewed with a finish line on the horizon. For purposes of this article and focusing on the administrator's role, I will focus on the firm as a whole level.

Assuming the administrator is connected to management and management's vision of the firm, then he or she will have an understanding of the type of firm the management wishes it to be, and can help steer marketing efforts to become that firm. Some general firm types may include focuses on quality, value, commitment to the community, results-driven, niche specialists, collegial and employee friendly, and exceptional client service. How are the key attributes being communicated to the marketplace? Does your firm have clear and consistent strategies in place to properly position the firm?

Just because your firm says it is a particular type of firm, it does not mean it necessarily is what it purports to be. For example, if the firm claims to be community-focused on its website, but its people do not act community-minded, it really is not. Therefore, behavior, and how said behavior is communicated to the outside

world, will drive the firm to its destination. For a firm to truly be community-minded, its people need to participate on boards and attend events, the firm needs to do community events and fundraising, and employees need to be free to participate in such events. Publicity needs to be generated from these cumulative efforts, website and marketing materials need to communicate these efforts, advertising needs to cover efforts, and clients and other friends of the firm should be invited to participate. Perhaps the firm can set up a Facebook page or use other social media committed only to its community outreach programs. Over time, the firm will be known as a true community-minded firm. This is the marathon approach. The sprinter would buy one table at an event and then expect to be known as a community leader.

Go to most firm websites and you will read how that firm is focused on delivering outstanding client service. There are great tag lines and buzzwords out there that firms use to tout their great service. The sprinter stops here. Words are nice but what is your firm doing on a consistent and ongoing basis to ensure exceptional client service? The marathoner keeps grinding by continuously asking clients how the firm is doing as well as having processes in place to ensure the service it claims to deliver are indeed delivered. The administrator can be instrumental in creating processes, making sure all employees are trained in service-related matters and being actively involved when the firm falls short in its service standards.

A gold medal is a gold medal. In legal marketing, it is much more realistic that gold medals will be won taking the marathon approach. Sprinting may get some lucky results, but in the long-term it is not a wise approach. The administrator can make sure that the firm remains focused and on target for the long-term as the lawyers are too busy servicing clients. This may not be glamorous and you certainly will not get any endorsement deals, but your firm will be healthier and more successful. The truth is that virtually all marathon runners will never win a gold medal but the personal accomplishment is worth all of the work nonetheless. Keep your eyes on the finish line.

*Ed Miller is the Chief Marketing Officer of  
Norris McLaughlin & Marcus in Bridgewater*



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Co-Chair, NJSBA Law Office  
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**Christine Filip**  
Co-Chair, NJSBA Law Office  
Management Committee

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## THE NEW JERSEY STATE BAR ANNUAL MEETING AND CONVENTION

BY SARA M. DIAZ

On May 16 and 17, 2012, the New Jersey Association of Legal Administrators (NJALA) presented programs at The New Jersey State Bar Association (NJSBA) Annual Meeting and Convention at the Borgata Hotel Casino and Spa in Atlantic City, New Jersey. NJALA organized programs on a number of legal management topics and had a table in the exhibit hall, along with 70 other companies and organizations. Over 2000 attorneys, judges, law clerks, administrators, and paralegals attended the event. All 75 courses at the convention offered CLE credits. For the second year in a row, the NJSBA held a "Solo Conference" on the first day of the convention geared for solo attorneys and small firms. The Solo Conference is directed at half of the NJSBA's membership, which falls in this category. These attorneys turn to the NJSBA for assistance with significant management issues, since they do not have in-house management.

The NJALA Bar Relations committee members, some of whom are members of the bar's Law Office Management Committee, were responsible for the planning of the programs, and represented NJALA in Atlantic City. This year, Gayle Englert, Chris Filip, Michael Harrison, Lisa Cuffari, Louise Ruffo, Robert Long and I participated in this effort. Many folks who attend the NJSBA conference and visit the NJALA exhibit table are not familiar with our profession and our organization, so the event always provides a tremendous opportunity to get the NJALA name out there.

While participating in these efforts over the last few years, NJALA members also had the opportunity to meet companies that are exhibiting and are eager to provide services to the legal industry. When they learn about NJALA, they ask for information to become involved with our membership. Over the last few years, several NJALA business partner sponsors first heard of us at the NJSBA convention in Atlantic City.

NJALA organized the following programs for the NJSBA Annual Meeting. All our programs were well attended and offered 1.5 or 2.0 CLE credits.

- **Marketing and Ethics: Maximizing Results while Avoiding Liability.** This program focused on the intersection of marketing actions and attorney liability from the points of view of speakers Carol Johnston of the Office of Attorney Ethics (OAE) and practicing defense attorney, Raymond Brown of Greenbaum Rowe. They reviewed the Rules of Professional Conduct, the investigative process of OAE, newer issues arising out of the use of social media, the role of ethics in the practice of law, and defensive strategies for lawyers and firms. This program was moderated by Christine S. Filip, Esq., Marketing Director with the Law Offices of David S. Barmak, LLC. Chris is also an NJALA member and Co-Chair of the Law Office Management Committee of the NJSBA.



Lisa Cuffari and Sara Diaz at the NJALA exhibit table.

- **Hiring and Firing and Everything in Between** was presented by Cheryl M. Stanton, Esq. of Ogletree, Deakins, et al., and Ravi Satturaji, Esq. This program was very thorough, and focused on precautions that employers should take during the hiring and firing process, including questions employers can and cannot ask applicants, social media policy recommendations, the importance of disseminating anti-discrimination policies regularly, and many other useful information to avoid

getting sued.

- **Attracting and Retaining Clients.** This program addressed how to attract new clients and retain current ones all within the backdrop of the ethics rules. The speakers addressed a critical facet of business development and law office management, including socially and ethically responsible marketing, networking, activity management, using association membership to develop business, using "partners" from other firms and industries to maximize results, holding successful events, and more. The speakers were Susan Reach Winters of Budd Lerner, Barbara Kauffman of Newark Regional Business Partnership, Rhonda Maraziti of WithumSmith+Brown PC, Kim Keating of Marsh & McLennan Agency, and Kate P. Sweeney of Morgan Stanley Smith. Christine S. Filip, Esq. also moderated this panel.

(Continued on page 16)

## New Jersey State Bar Meeting

(Continued from page 15)

- **Privacy and Security Exposures: Practical Concerns for Law Firms.** This program was conducted by Josh M. Kantrow of Wilson Elser, Daniel Roffman of FTI Consulting, and Ian Matyjewicz, Esq. of Jamison Risk Services. They addressed security breaches that law firms are experiencing around the world, and precautions to avoid exposure. It addressed data privacy laws and regulations; firm liability for a security breach, and what steps to take in the event of a breach. They recommended that law firms change passwords periodically on all devices, especially cell phones. They emphasized the importance of protecting the client's data, in particular while using devices in hot spots.
- **Beyond the Website: Social Media and Search Engine Optimization.** This program addressed practical ways to use and manage social media to help an attorney raise her/his public profile and ultimately to build a larger book of business. Joyce L. Heinold, Esq. of Rakoski & Ross, P.C., and Christine S. Filip, Esq., Co-Chair of the Law Office Management Committee, presented this hands on seminar.

NJALA's involvement with the NJSBA continues to grow and expand. NJALA members are often asked to consult and participate in other bar events including a Technology Showcase that took place at the Law Center in March, 2012, and a Technology Symposium that took place this past August. Articles published in the *Jer-Z-Journal* are shared with the bar and posted on the NJSBA website for the benefit of its members. These efforts showcase the skills and expertise of those running law firms in New Jersey that would otherwise fall under the radar.

NJALA members who cannot attend the ALA national or regional conferences may want to consider attending the NJSBA Annual Meeting and Convention in Atlantic City next year. In one-and-a-half days they can attend educational sessions on law firm management topics near home.

*Sara M. Diaz is the Director of Administration of Chasan Leyner & Lamparello, P.C., in Secaucus*

## Leading the Team With CLI

(Continued from page 10)

Second, offer to volunteer on a committee. One of the keys to our chapter's success is the people who get involved. If you are interested, you can find a list of committees on our website or at the back of this newsletter issue. Lastly, you may want to consider joining the board and have an opportunity to experience CLI for yourself.

*I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something that I can do.*

~Helen Keller

*Audrey M. Serban is the Office Manager of Fisher & Phillips LLP in Murray Hill*



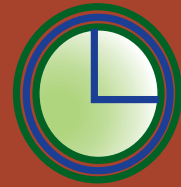
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# A Quarter Past



## April, 2012



The Business Partner/Volunteer Appreciation Night was held on Wednesday, April 4, 2012, at Cooking Thyme cooking school in Westfield. Members and business partners joined together to cook up one fantastic meal that they all enjoyed.

The April Monthly Meeting was held on Tuesday, April 10, 2012, at the Highlawn Pavilion in West Orange. Natalie Loeb of Loeb Consulting Group presented an interactive session on “*An Introduction to DiSC Management.*”

An Educational Workshop was held on Tuesday, April 17, 2012, at the offices of Greenberg Traurig in Florham Park. Richard Schulman of All Covered presented a session on “*Virtual Office Management.*”

The ALA National Conference & Exposition was held in Honolulu, Hawaii, from April 22-26, 2012. Some of our members were lucky enough to be able to attend this extraordinary conference.

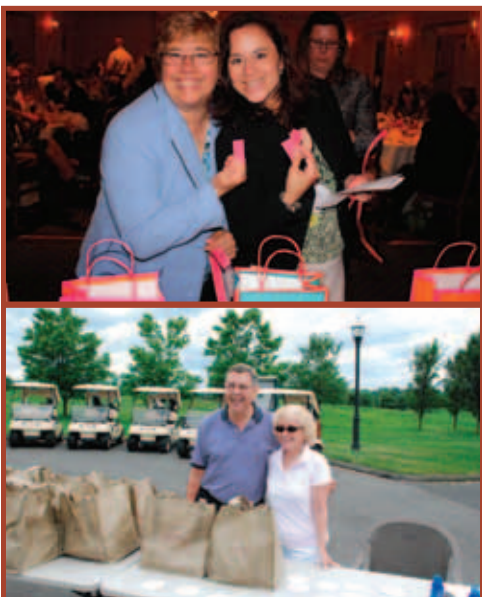
## May, 2012

The Annual Managing Partner’s Night was held on Tuesday, May 8, 2012, at The Manor in West Orange. David H. Dugan, III, Esq., presented “*Legal Ethics for Everyone in the Firm.*” CLE ethics credits were attainable for this session.

The New Jersey State Bar Association Annual Meeting and Convention was held on May 16 and 17, 2012, at the Borgata Hotel in Atlantic City. NJALA members presented sessions on marketing, employment law, and general office management. All sessions were CLE eligible.



## June, 2012



The spring social was held on Thursday, June 14, 2012, at the Rock Spring Country Club in West Orange. The chapter celebrated its 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with *A Night at the Raceway!* The new board of trustees was installed as well. It was a great night for all who attended.

The Past Presidents’ Golf Outing was held on Monday, June 25, 2012, at the Hyatt Hills Golf Course. Though the outing was cut short by rain, fun was had by all who attended. There is a rain date for this event, scheduled for September 24, 2012.



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## WRITE YOUR OWN PRESCRIPTION

BY KERRY JEAN MOORE

Ask a group of law firm administrators for their opinions on just about anything, and you will likely get a wide variety of viewpoints. But virtually all of them will agree on at least one thing: There is a new paradigm of law firm management, and it requires each of us to accomplish more tasks with fewer resources.

We can also all agree that doing more with less requires highly-qualified and highly-motivated employees. But how do we keep our valued employees motivated and connected to the firm's goals? We can start by realizing that, even in a bad job market, our stellar employees have other employment options. We should also remember that losing a valued employee to a competitor with better perks hurts a firm in several ways. Not only is the firm deprived of the employee's talents, but the employee's departure can also negatively affect morale, which ultimately affects the firm's bottom line. Clearly, retaining stellar employees is a serious challenge, and it is one that an administrator ignores at his/her peril. But how can we meet this challenge without breaking the bank?

Fortunately, several innovative incentives and perks have been developed that are not only reasonably inexpensive, but that will actually save a firm money in the long term. One promising incentive to consider is a "wellness initiative." We all know that healthcare costs are continuing to increase; that there is a direct correlation between disability costs and an employee's wellness; and that an enormous amount of healthcare dollars goes to treating chronic and preventable illnesses. We also know that sick employees do not come to work, and that employees on disability for preventable and/or chronic conditions further drain the workforce and increase healthcare spending. Thus, from both a national and a firm perspective, our goal should be a workforce of healthy, energized employees.

Employees today are being pulled in myriad directions. Many are raising children, some are caring for ailing parents, and still others are doing both of those things simultaneously. And all employees are contending with our challenging economy. These demands are relentless, and they leave employees with little time for focusing on stress-reduction, making the right food choices and getting enough exercise. Since employees generally spend about one-third of their time in the office, a wellness initiative that promotes health and encourages positive

lifestyle changes can be a welcome prescription. It can also foster a renewed appreciation for the firm that has taken such an interest in their well-being.

Given sufficient institutional support and commitment, a formal wellness program is a worthwhile endeavor that can produce both short- and long-term results. Keep in mind, however, that a wellness program that is formalized as a component of a firm's health care plan and made mandatory for all employees must comply with federal law, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, as well as with state law.

But a formalized wellness program is not necessary in order to achieve a healthier office environment with healthier, and more satisfied, employees. The purpose of this article is to encourage administrators to consider taking smaller informal steps to introduce healthy lifestyle changes for employees and to incentivize employees to begin their journey to good health. These steps are easy to follow and can yield great results in terms of both employee health and employee morale.

First, take the pulse of your office in order to gauge interest and to determine what employees think would be most beneficial to them. Generally, diet, exercise and stress reduction will top the list. Next, with list in hand, assess what will work for your law firm based on its own demographics and firm culture. An initiative that is both tailored to your employees' interests and in sync with your firm's culture will generate the most buzz and benefits. Gather support for your initiative by making sure your Managing Partner is an enthusiastic supporter, since participation from the top generally enhances morale at all levels.

Start off slowly, perhaps with a seminar presented by an outside consultant who will talk about the harmful effects of stress or the importance of proper rest and nutrition. Consultants are generally willing to make free presentations of this kind as a way to publicize their services. Other small steps can include placing hand sanitizers strategically around the office, arranging a flu shot program and asking the local gym for a discounted corporate rate. Build on that momentum by looking into on-site yoga classes, weight loss programs, and smoking cessation programs. Other steps can include organizing

*(Continued on page 20)*

## Write Your Own Prescription

(Continued from page 19)

employee participation in 5K races, designating an office meditation room, and creating an employee forum for swapping healthy recipes.

A huge step toward improving wellness is to get everyone moving. The ill-effects of being a sedentary “desk warrior” are making headlines. To combat this, consider a three-month “walking challenge” to motivate employees to become more active. Pedometers (emblazoned with the firm’s logo, of course!) could be given to interested employees who would track their steps during the challenge period. Awards could be given to top achievers.


You could also plan an office “house call,” essentially a health fair at which employees could receive blood pressure, cholesterol and other screenings. Information on follow-up measures to address any screening issues could be provided. Although certainly worthwhile, you should be aware that screenings can raise issues of compliance and employee privacy. Also keep in mind that employees may be reluctant to participate in a health screening if they feel they will be discriminated against because of their test results. A health fair could also be a good opportunity to invite a masseuse, a local farmer’s market, and even skincare vendors to set up booths and meet employees.

One of the easiest changes to make involves the food coming into your office. Your current caterers and candy-machine vendors should be more than willing to partner with your office to provide healthy menu options. The vendors can also post dietary exchanges for their menus that can assist employees who have special health needs or are following syndicated diet plans. Be creative: The gamut of options is as wide open as your imagination and your employees’ needs.

Perhaps the most important challenge of all, though, is to make sure you follow through on your commitment to promote employee wellness. Give your initiative a physical every year to assess progress and make adjustments. Realize that changing your office’s “unhealthy habits” will not happen overnight, and expect to meet resistance from the usual office naysayers. Stay focused and encourage your employees to stay on track.

As the Chinese philosopher Lao-tzu said: “The journey of a thousand miles begins with a first step.” Here’s hoping this has inspired you to take the first step toward developing an office culture of wellness!

*Kerry Jean Moore is the Business Manager of Greenberg Traurig in Florham Park*





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# TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME: THE 7<sup>TH</sup> NJALA PAST PRESIDENTS' GOLF OUTING

BY JOANNE A. O'BEIRNE

Okay, you are all thinking, "Joanne has the wrong sport!" Well, surprise, you are wrong! It is a ball game, with a little white ball having between 300-500 dimples in each. Thirty of us chased them all over the very beautifully manicured, regulation nine-hole Hyatt Hills Golf Complex in Clark, New Jersey. The Hyatt Hills complex has a full service clubhouse with pro/gift-shop and Senorita's Mexican Restaurant and Bar, of which we took full advantage. Yes, welcome to the Past Presidents' Golf Outing, sponsored and attended by our business partners and NJALA members.

When first asked to step in and write the article for this event, I immediately said I had better look up some golf history. I discovered that golf originated from a game played on the coast of Scotland during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Players would hit a pebble, instead of a ball, around the sand dunes using a stick or club. After the year 1750, golf evolved into the sport as we recognize it today. We have come a long way, bebe!! Clubs evolved from wooden shaft clubs to today's sets of woods and irons. Golf balls went from pebbles to leather bags stuffed with feathers to the Gutta-Percha ball in 1848, which was made from the sap of the Gutta tree. In 1898, the first one-piece rubber cored ball came out. Players noticed that as balls became old and scarred, they traveled farther. In 1905 the adding of the dimple pattern therefore became the norm. Caddies, called the "beast of burden," came into play in the 1880s (also when golf bags first came into use). I thought that term originated when they discovered Law Firm Administrators! This is just scratching the surface of the history of golf, but you can Google it yourself and learn more. It was really very interesting.

I had the best laughs when reading, "The Thirteen Rules of the Gentlemen Golfers of Edinburgh," written in 1774. Here are just two of the thirteen I found interesting:

#4. You are not to remove stones, bones [*bones???*], or any break club for sake of playing your ball, except on the fair green, and that only within a club's length of your ball.

#6. If your balls be found anywhere touching one another, you are to lift the first ball until you play the last.

I'm sorry: I lost it at that one, and now I move on. Back to the

main event!

The day started with rain all morning, and the question of whether or not we would be playing at all. But at 10 a.m., organizer Pat McGovern told us it was a go. By the time noon rolled around, it was sunny, and we were greeted by Pat and our fellow ALA'ers and given a fabulous goodie bag filled with wonderful golf paraphernalia, electronic gadgets, and so much more, all donated by our generous business partners and fellow law firms. If it weren't for our business partners we would all have been working this day! A big thank you from all of us to our business partners for all you do for the ALA all year long.

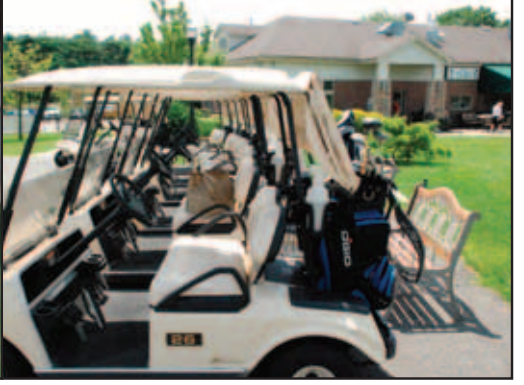
At noon, lunch was served in the private room in Senorita's. It was a delicious buffet filled with salads, sandwiches and something for everyone. After lunch from 1-3 p.m., those of us who chose to do so went to the four golf clinics given by the Hyatt Hills pros, Dan Hollis, Gary Ostrega, Leo Talsick and Ray Johnson. Our hats are off to them for their wonderful instruction, tips and tricks. 3:00 p.m. and we were off to the greens! Our eight teams all scrambled in our golf carts to our assigned hole to start. It was "Best Ball," which means that everyone tees off. Everyone then goes to the location where the best shot landed, and takes their next shot from there. This keeps the game moving. Amazingly enough, almost everyone at one time had the best ball, no matter what level golfer you are. Beginner's luck is alive and well in Clark, New Jersey!

I was on Team #4, the Aflac team, playing with Jim Van Leir, a seasoned golfer, playing with brand new clubs; Bernie Merer, playing for the first time, dressed so savvy, and looking the part of a long-time player. Unfortunately, Nick Duchensky of Aflac had a family emergency and had to leave right after lunch. (Nick, I hope all is well.) So we were a team of three. I thank Bernie and Jim for having lots of patience while I tried and tried to hit that little white ball down the fairway. Thank heavens I made up for it on the putting green. Putting is 50% of the game. At least I could contribute something other than laughs!

At 4:15 p.m. we arrived at our 4<sup>th</sup> hole of the game. Lightning had started flying around the course and quickly followed by a monsoon. Jim led us to safety at the outhouse(!), where we could take shelter. We found Team #4, Kevin O'Connor of Document

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## Take Me Out To The Ball Game

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Solutions, Jamie Howlett, Helen Lysaght and Anita Setaro, there ahead of us. We were soon joined by Team #1, Susan Carrigan and Jim Ahern of All Covered, and then by Jim Wostbrock and Jackie Pampinella of Team #5. In total there were six carts trying to fit under that small overhang of the restroom. There was no more room at the Inn! Jackie drew our attention to a large fox running across the links as the lightning was striking, which was some sight.



The weather was not fit for man nor fox!

At 4:30 p.m., the game was called off and the course closed. It was decided to just jump ahead to cocktails at the bar, where stories were told followed by a wonderful buffet dinner of pasta, chicken, salmon, asparagus, salads, and garlic mashed potatoes that everyone was raving about. Dessert was fabulous. I loved the flan and other decadent treats.



Awards were different this year as there were no winners or losers, as the game had not been fully played. We randomly pulled the prizewinners out of a hat and they were as follows:

**1st Place Team** (\$75 gift card to pro shop): Team #4 (Aflac)—me, Jim Van Leir, Bernie Merer, and Jim Wostbrook was pulled as the 4<sup>th</sup> member of our team as we were short one.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Team** (\$50 gift card to pro shop): Team #2—Nancy Minnette of Somerset Hills Bank, Audrey Young, Gayle Englert and Ray Janeczek

**Closest to the Pin** (\$50 golf card to pro shop): Anita Setaro

**Longest Drive** (\$50 card to pro shop): Ron Henry

**Most Honest** (usually awarded to the last place team, \$25 Macy's gift cards): Team #6— Richard Walters of MCS, Ken Bailey, Tom O'Connor and Fran Puntillo

In addition, Susan Carrigan won a \$150 Amex gift card donated by All Covered; Helen Lysaght won a \$100 American Express gift card donated by MCS; Kim Haduck of won a wine

basket donated by Somerset Bank; and Tom O'Connor, Fran Puntillo and Pat McGovern won golf umbrellas donated by Regal Bank.

We again cannot say enough about our business partners and their generosity of sponsorship of the golf event. Thank you so very much, it is so appreciated by all of us.

Another wonderful turn of events: Since our game was cancelled due to inclement weather, to say the least, Hyatt Hills Golf Center provided every one of us a certificate to return and play again this golf season, which includes a complimentary golf cart. We have already planned the return for September 24<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. so we all can play together. Once again, we were all winners this day! Thanks to Hyatt Hills for their magnanimous gesture.

How can I sum up the antics of the day? Have you seen the movie "Caddy Shack"? We came close to making a revival of it. I saw Ron Henry chasing a ground hog, and I swear Pat McGovern was seen trying to putt a hand grenade into the hole on the fifth green.



In all seriousness, this is a fun event for golfers of all levels, beginners to seasoned players. It was a day full of golf, laughter and talk among fellow administrators and

business partners in a relaxed setting ... that is, until the lightning, thunder and deluge of rain came and interrupted our game. With all that said, it didn't dampen our spirits. I met and spoke to so many of our business partners (sorry I could not name you all). I thank you and the committee who worked so hard to put this together: Sarah Clark, Pat McGovern, Anita Setaro, and Ken Bailey, for such a wonderful event. Fore, and good night.



*Joanne A. O'Beirne is the Office Manager of Wolkstein, Von Ellen & Brown, LLC, in Springfield*



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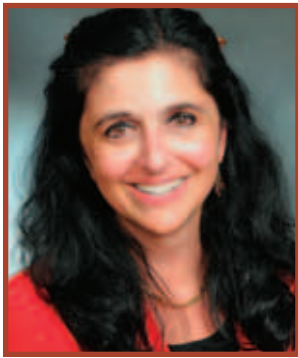
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## AND THE WINNER IS...: COMPETITION IN THE WORKPLACE

BY DOREEN MARINO

Do you believe that competition in your office can be good? In most law firm environments, competition already exists. We just don't identify it as competition. Take, for example, your associates. From the time they join your firm they are in competition with the other associates to stand out, succeed, and make partner. When we take on our new fall associates, we don't say, "Let the competition begin." But it really is a competition.

What about a merit bonus structure? When or if your firm administers merit bonuses (regardless of level), the overachievers start setting the standard for success and a model employee—one that drives competition for getting the most and being the best.

But there is a dark side now, isn't there? What about those who get rewarded and don't deserve it? Oh my gosh! Does that really happen? Yes, of course it does. We have all seen this happen. It is devastating to the other employees. Once fairness is removed from competition, you are left with disgruntled employees who no longer participate.

The key factor in office competition is fairness. If you will be unable to maintain the fairness, then rethink the competition. Why bother? Because competition can be very beneficial for your firm and your employees.

There are types of office competition that can be introduced that keep things fair. I will demonstrate "how" after I explain the reason why.

There are three major benefits to office competition when administered correctly under the proper criteria:

1. **Employee Engagement.** Being engaged in one's job doesn't mean just coming to work and doing a good job. Engagement means getting up and *wanting* to go to work; looking forward to it; being excited to see what the day brings. Competition is a force to help keep your employees engaged. If you can keep your employees engaged, you, too, will get excited about going to work.

Don't forget the crucial fact that people want to be managed. Way too many employees feel that they work very hard and no one cares. When you manage your employees, it confirms to them that the firm cares. Therefore, competitions mean the firm is not only watching but cares what the employees are doing.

2. **Fairness.** Competition creates a sense of fairness. Regardless of your firm culture, you will hear the "bad morale" syndrome over and over if you do not instill a sense of fairness. We learn when we are in fourth grade that life isn't fair, and we spend the remainder of our lives seeking fairness. Mankind is very strange.

**"Competition is a force to help keep your employees engaged. If you can keep your employees engaged, you, too, will get excited about going to work."**

Employees not only want fairness, they demand it. Almost eighty percent of employee complaints are a result of perceived unfairness. Think about it—"She is late all the time and no one does anything about it"; "He always takes more than his allotted time at lunch"; "She is always on the phone"; "She wastes

time on personal issues and then everyone has to help her to get her work done"; "He is absent all the time and no one says anything"; etc. I can provide hundreds of examples. Once employees feel they are being fairly treated, they feel at peace with the firm—now, how nice is that?

Competitions set the criteria that each employee will need to meet. That criteria sets the fairness among all the participants. By criteria, I mean the rules surrounding the competition that each competitor will need to be abide by in order to succeed.

3. **Increased Productivity.** Increased productivity as a result of competitions is probably a given. What isn't a given is that employees reap the benefits of increased productivity. What makes employees happy? The overwhelming answer is *a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day*. Why? Productivity supports personal professional development.

Regardless of the position in the firm (that means even including you), everyone needs to feel as if they are an integral part of the firm; everyone wants to be an important part of

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## Competition in the Workplace

(Continued from page 26)

what it is they do every day. When productivity is increased, people are more important; they feel more important; they want to continue the feeling the next day.

### How to go about creating office competition

I refer to creating the criteria, and that is crucial to any competition. But it does not have to be complicated. Here are some examples of simple competitions:

The person that loses the most *percentage* of weight wins a \$200 gift card. (Criteria: percentage of weight loss. Fairness: It can be applied across the board to moderate weight losers to obesity.)

- The person with the least amount of lateness will win a week of free time off at the end of the year. (Criteria: least amount of lateness. Fairness: It can be applied across the board to all employees.)
- The person that baked the best cookies (independent judges) will win a \$100 gift card. (Criteria: baking. Fairness: voluntarily enter the competition.)
- Every time someone volunteers for a job that does not fall under their job function, they will get a free lunch. (Criteria: Volunteer to help out beyond your job. Fairness: Voluntary performance; those that do not volunteer are not penalized in any way.)

As competitions get more complicated, the criteria needs to be evaluated and studied and even tested. After creating your criteria, make sure it is achievable. If not, employees then complain that the competition is not fair. For example, *the person with the least amount of lateness at the end of the year* is something that is achievable. *The person with no lateness at the end of the year* is not achievable, and no one will participate.

Make sure your employees are correctly grouped to participate in a competition. Performance criteria, specifically, should be limited to each line of profession. And do not set criteria across the board that do not relate to employees across the board. A good example, a competition among paralegals: The first paralegal to reach 1,000 billable hours receives a dinner for two at the best restaurant in town. If you have part-time paralegals, you have knocked them out of the competition before it even started. Be careful with the criteria and test its fairness. *The first paralegal to reach 80% of their billable hour requirement will receive a dinner for two at the best restaurant in town.* Much better, but make sure all paralegals have fair billable hour requirements. If you have a full-time paralegal who has a low billable hour requirement because of the area of law they practice in, he/she should not be included in the competition or the competition should be changed.

This may seem obvious, but I will make a note of it anyway. Make sure your results are measurable. Saying *if you work hard you will get rewarded* means you have the absolute ability to measure whether or not someone is really working hard; not just looking like they are working hard; not just saying how hard they are working; but real measurable results showing that that employee worked hard. I give you this example because it is something not measurable. It is a matter of perception—the employee's and yours.

Measurable results are things that can be quantified, counted, weighed against each other, etc. In instances where performance is trying to be measured, give credibility for the specific tasks performed (tasks that relate to the competition) by awarding something tangible, such as a ticket, a coin, a star, etc. Counting tickets, stars and coins is measurable.

Don't forget team competitions. Getting people to work together toward a goal is actually very fun for the employees, whether or not they reach the goal. For example, *if we are able to clear up the backlog by Friday at 5:00 p.m., the firm will have an ice cream party on Monday.* Isn't that what sports are all about? I don't mean the ice cream. I mean accomplishing a joint goal.

Team competitions build spirit and camaraderie. Do not set a goal for a team to which all its members cannot contribute. For example, if the project requires additional hours and only a third of the team have the ability to do that, the competition does not have fair criteria. The members will argue about people not contributing to the goal.

Competitions can be used for performance development and improvement, for health and wellness programs and for just plain fun. Never, ever develop a system whereby non-winners of competitions get penalized. If you haven't figured it out yet, but I can't stress enough, never administer a competition that does not have fair criteria. And one last helpful hint: If you cannot come up with the criteria, let the proposed participants come up with the criteria for you. Employees know more of what they consider fair achievable results than you think.

See you at the finish line.

***Doreen Marino is the Human Resources Director  
of Lerner, David, Littenberg, Krumholz  
& Mentlik, LLP, in Westfield***



## AND THEY'RE OFF!!!

BY FRAN PUNTILLO, CLM, SPHR

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, NJALA held its annual Spring Social at the Rock Spring Country Club in West Orange. Even the weather cooperated to make the event successful! Elli Albert was actually able to take pictures of the 2012-2013 board of trustees **outside** this year (you might remember, in the past several years, it has rained the night of our event). Elli's photo of the new board, lit by the setting sun, appears in this article.

So, after sampling the beautiful weather outside, chapter members and business partners/sponsors enjoyed networking during a relaxing cocktail hour accompanied by wonderful hors d'oeuvres. Before moving onto the "fun part" of the evening, we carved out a short period of time to devote to the final, year-end business of the chapter.

Gayle Englert, our outgoing (in more ways than one) chapter president, thanked and bid farewell to the board members who will be stepping down from the board this year: Elli Albert, Sarah Clark, Lisa Cuffari, and Sara Diaz. Each of these ladies made substantial contributions of their time and talent to the chapter over many years and will be sorely missed by NJALA's board, our chapter as a whole, and by me personally. Then, as chair of the nominations committee, I had the pleasure of introducing the incoming board of trustees. Pat McGovern conducted the swearing in of the 2012-2013 board, and Gayle Englert formally turned over the NJALA president's gavel to Mary Ellen Dolan, the new 2012-2013 chapter president. Gayle's work is not done, however. She will continue to serve the chapter on the NJALA's Past Presidents' Council.

While dinner was served, the evening's entertainment, "A Night at the Raceway," began. Each attendee was given a list of horses and some "funny money" to bet on the horse of their choice in eight races. As you know, United States currency sports a picture of past presidents. NJALA was not to be outdone: Our chapter's "currency" also bore a past president's face—Ms.

Englert's! The "bookies" from Party King Entertainment were very helpful and assisted the one or two novices in the crowd when it came time to put their Englert money down on the horse they hoped would win.

The suspense built at the beginning of each race as the horses lined up at the gate. The lines at the betting stalls lengthened; "money" passed through the windows to the bookies; and eager people scurried back to their tables to have dessert, each

hoping they had picked the winner of the race. When the gates opened and the horses charged out, chapter members and business partners urged their selections on. I heard cries of "Get the lead out, Gayle" and "Shake your [tail], Anita!" (edited for a GP audience/reader), but I assure you, these comments were directed at the **horses** racing around the track, not their namesakes! By way of explanation, to commemorate our chapter's 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

during our social, some of the

horses were named after songs that were popular back in the late 1960s, and some were named after chapter members, and other memorable people of the sixties.

The evening came to a close as Audrey Serban picked the prize winners for the evening. Lots of great prizes donated by the chapter and our business partners were awarded. Kindles, gift cards, Coach wristlets, and an iPad went home with the lucky chapter members and/or business partner winners.

For those of you who did not attend this year's NJALA social, you missed a fun night! Jackie Pampinella and Audrey Serban put together another wonderful and memorable event. Great job, ladies!

*Fran Puntillo, CLM, SPHR, is the Office Manager of Weiner Lesniak LLP in Parsippany*



*The 2012-2013 NJALA Board of Trustees*







## UP TO THE MINUTE . . .

### SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF THE NJALA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS HELD MAY TO JULY, 2012

BY DOREEN MARINO

Board Members are Mary Ellen Dolan, President; Audrey Serban, Vice President, Programs; Robbin Dolan, CLM, Vice President, Membership; Michael Harrison, Treasurer; Doreen Marino, Secretary; Gayle Englert, Immediate Past President; Fran Puntillo, CLM, Trustee; Mary Beth Donoghue, Trustee; Jackie Pampinella, Trustee; Mitchell Rait, Trustee; Jim Van Leir, Trustee; Kurt Brown, Alternate Trustee; Nancy Harris, Alternate Trustee; Teri Siegle, Alternate Trustee; and Louise Ruffo, Alternate Trustee.

#### Programs and Workshops

Audrey Serban presented the proposed schedule of speakers and topics for the monthly educational meetings. Topics included recommendations by the membership. There will be a focus on CLM creditable sessions; however, topics beneficial to the membership will be the priority.

The board also discussed the possibility of having educational sessions videotaped and then posted on the chapter's website for viewing for members unable to attend the live sessions.

Robbin Dolan reported that there is a tentative plan in place to have five workshops this year.

#### Treasurer's Report

Audrey reported that we are preparing for our annual audit.

The board voted to raffle off a minimum of two regional conference scholarships and one national conference scholarship during the Business Partner Exposition.

The board discussed changing signatories to the NJALA account.

#### Membership Reports/Renewals

Membership drive is underway. Membership renewals are in the process of being collected. Mary Ellen reported that we are at 149 members.

#### Community Challenge

Mitchell Rait agreed to work with Jim Van Leir on the chapter's community challenge efforts.

#### Business Partner Relations

Mary Ellen suggested and the board approve a series of "Coffee Connections" whereby a small group of members will have breakfast with a small group of Business Partners in order to strengthen communication.

#### Business Partner Exposition

The date for the Exposition is September 19, 2012. An educational workshop will precede the expo.

#### ALA Awards—2012

Gayle Englert and Fran Puntillo will assess the award requirements and provide direction to the board on the potential submissions.

#### Compensation Survey/Equipment Survey

The compensation survey is being finalized and Doreen Formato was the drawn winner of the \$500 gift certificate. The equipment survey is underway and should be submitted to the membership for participation at the end of August. Audrey confirmed that those that participants in the Compensation Survey and the Equipment Survey are eligible for a drawing for a scholarship covering the regional conference registration.

#### Publicity

Doreen Marino reported that publicity is on target. Doreen also reported that the Golf Outing photo was submitted to the New Jersey Law Journal.

#### Website

A training session will be arranged for new Board members.

*Doreen Marino is the Director of Human Resources of  
Lerner, David, Littenberg, Krumholz  
& Mentlik, LLP in Westfield*





## DRIVING DOWN THE SEO HIGHWAY: AN INTERVIEW WITH TWO MAVENS

BY CHRISTINE S. FILIP, ESQ.

It is indisputable that prospective clients (of all ages) use search engines to find qualified lawyers. This does not mean that clients are shopping for legal services on the Internet; what it means in most cases is that they are checking a lawyer's credentials by vetting search engine results. As a result, if a lawyer does not show up in those results, they may be excluded from the selection process. One would be excluded for not having a search engine optimization (SEO) process in place at a firm.

In an SEO project over the last two years, I recognized the following results:

- SEO markedly increased viewers to the website;
- The largest referral source to the website was Google;
- Website visitors went directly to the bio page of an attorney and virtually ignored the rest of the website. This pattern demonstrated over time that they were not shopping blindly, but using search engine results to verify the credentials of a lawyer;
- The SEO process was paired with publishing content (with hyperlinks) to "syndicators," *i.e.*, websites that pushed content out to other portals, in this case Martindale, Lexology, and Mondaq. As a result, visitors to the website also came through content published on those syndicating portals.

It became obvious to me that that using SEO opened a new pipeline to support business development that one could ignore only at one's peril. New matters did result.

In this article I interview Rick Simmons of Dinkum Interactive and Ed Delia of Delia Associates, both of whose companies are at the center of the SEO wave. I asked them the following list of questions:

1. *Why should law firms be very interested in SEO as part of their business development process?*

a. **Rick:** Referrals are still the biggest part of getting new business, but increasingly folks are using the search component of the Internet for specific areas of law, such as IP, for example. If you are not among the those who come up from the search, you will not be considered. In addition, it is important that the names of the principle members of the firm come up in search results

b. **Ed:** SEO drives leads—bottom line. When people are looking for a law firm through a search engine, they are actively seeking that service. While traditional advertising has value from a name recognition and awareness standpoint, it's hard to get on a buyer's radar if they don't have an immediate or pending need.

2. *Describe the SEO process so that an administrator can explain it to her/his executive committee.*

a. **Rick:** Search Engine Optimization is the process of making your website more visible to those prospects looking for very specific information about areas of the law. It is considered a process because the search engines want you to prove why you should come up under specific searches. Increasing visibility, establishing the firm as being "experts" in the field takes time—consistent valuable content is an important part of the process.

b. **Ed:** Think like a buyer of legal services. What terms might they search for when seeking a firm like yours? Use those words and key phrases as a basis to start thinking about the keyword strategy for your site. Create compelling and viewer-focused content around each of those keywords. Devote landing pages on your website that specifically address and expand on those keyword concepts. Develop the tags on the back end of the site

**"The biggest factor in obtaining results is competition. If there is little competition for a keyword set, you can see results very quickly. Otherwise, seeing results will take longer."**

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## SEO

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(titles, descriptions, etc.) to make sure that search engines “see” what is important about the page. Share your content and find ways to have other websites link back to your content. Search engines view links like votes for your site, and give more credibility to your site if it has a good number of credible links.

3. *What steps can a law firm take to start an SEO process by itself?*

a. **Rick:** It is very difficult to start just in-house because very often the firm is too close to things. Example: Are prospects looking for an “attorney” or a “lawyer,” and how are they designating their geographic preference—“NJ,” “New Jersey,” or are they looking at “Newark.” I would suggest having an outside firm do a website assessment with the deliverable be an online strategy—much of the strategy can be done in-house.

b. **Ed:** Start creating content. Add a blog to your website and regularly add content. Make sure that your content provides significant value; uses keywords and concepts that you believe people will search for, and that it is updated regularly. Google rewards fresh content as well as content that it believes will provide value for the end user. Good content can also produce links by itself if it is marketed properly.

4. *What business development results can you report from your history in this business and how long does it take to experience credible results?*

a. **Rick:** The answer depends on the focus—the more focused you are in the practice, the faster the results can be. An example might be “IP lawyer” versus “IP lawyer in New York City.” The more focused the search is, and understanding how prospects are searching for that practice area will deliver faster results. The timing question is a bit tougher because it depends on how diligent you will be at putting new “valuable” content online and how competitive the practice area happens to be—“personal injury attorney” is very competitive and may take a year or more [to get better results]. More specific practice areas that are typically much less competitive can be a few months—it takes work either way.

b. **Ed:** It is possible to see credible results in the first few months. One of our attorney clients started a blog, which we helped them to optimize. In the first five months, the blog generated three highly qualified leads, and averaged over 300 visits each month, almost all of them as a direct result of Google searches. The biggest factor in obtaining results is competition. If there is little competition for a keyword set, you can see results very quickly. Otherwise, seeing results will take longer.

One of the ways to see results more quickly is to focus on long tail keywords, especially in the beginning of an SEO program. These focused, less searched keywords often have less competition, and you can get a higher percentage of traffic as a result. Because they are so focused, they are also often much more relevant to your site, and usually much more qualified. As your site grows and traffic increases, you can begin to focus on other keywords with a higher search volume.

5. *What types of reporting do you give law firm clients on a periodic basis to demonstrate results?*

a. **Rick:** We provide a monthly report that looks at not only the keywords being tracked but overall visibility and many other factors. There should be a schedule of things to do monthly and some things like may need to be done weekly.

b. **Ed:** We believe the most important metric that we can give our clients is conversions. Traffic is nice, but leads are what really matter. Along with conversions, our monthly reports include comprehensive data that can help drive future decision making, show market trends, and give insights into the volume and type of traffic that is visiting. The most common metrics we give to all our clients are overall traffic (with comparisons to previous traffic), traffic sources, keyword rankings, search terms bringing traffic, and any link building activity. We also provide general visitor data such as time on site, bounce rate, and pages visited.

To sum up our experts’ commentary, they suggest that, as a baseline to begin SEO work, a firm decide what keywords describe it; use those keywords as metatags on its website; continuously publish content that uses and hyperlinks those keywords back to the firm’s website; and start analyzing how that process changes website visitors’ behavior. That can be done by setting up a Google Analytics program, which is free, and as I have suggested, start publishing content to “syndicators,” which are websites that push out material to many other news portals. Those that I mentioned, which are among many others not listed, are syndicating sites like Lexology, Mondaq and Martindale. Finally, any content should be published on the individual attorney’s social media sites. All of this adds an amount of search engine attraction that a firm should not ignore. It is the newest, but not the only, business development highway.

*Christine S. Filip, Esq., is the president of Business Development Partners, which focuses on Business Development, Media and Public Relations. Chris can be reached at 917-733-5302 or at christinefilip8@gmail.com.*



# What's on Tap

## ALA and NJALA 2012 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Wednesday, September 19, 2012 (6:00-8:30 pm)**

Join us this year for the **Business Partner Expo**, which returns to Mayfair Farms in West Orange. The BPE is a great opportunity to network with business partners, new and old, preview new products and services, and enjoy a great evening with your NJALA peers. This year's Expo will again feature a conference scholarship drawing as well as great prizes provided by our business partners, so don't forget to bring a stack of business cards! Prior to the Expo, educational workshops will be offered (TBA). A buffet dinner will be served.

**Wednesday, October 17, 2012 (2:00 pm)**

**ALA Webinar.** Topic: "Marketing on a Shoestring Budget," presented by Sally Schmidt of Schmidt Marketing, Inc. CLM credit available.

**October 18-20, 2012**

Didn't make it to the ALA Conference in Hawaii last year? Then consider attending the Region I Conference & Exposition at the MGM Grand at Foxwoods in Mashantucket, Connecticut! Regional conferences provide all the benefits of the national conference—including workshops, guest speakers, and plenty of networking time with business partners and peers—but in a more intimate setting. Registration is underway! See [www.alanet.org](http://www.alanet.org) for details.

**Wednesday, September 19, 2012 (2:00 pm)**

**ALA Webinar.** Topic: "Of Foxes, Hedgehogs and Law Firm Profitability," presented by Vincent Bell, Director of Administration of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, LLP, and Mark Santiago of Kerma Partners. CLM credit available.

**Wednesday, November 13, 2012 (6:00-8:30 pm)**

**Monthly Meeting and Workshop** at the Highlawn Pavilion in West Orange. Topic: TBA. A buffet dinner will be served.

**Wednesday, October 9, 2012 (6:00-8:30 pm)**

**Monthly Meeting and Workshop** at the Highlawn Pavilion in West Orange. Topic: "Why Diversity Matters To Your Firm—A Business and Long Term Strategic Perspective," presented by Josh Friedlander, Chief Human Resources Officer for Latham & Watkins, LLP. A buffet dinner will be served.

**Wednesday, November 14, 2012 (2:00 pm)**

**ALA Webinar.** Topic: "Dealing with Substance Abuse in the Workplace," presented by Lynn Hanks, M.D. CLM credit available.

### For information about:

**Monthly meetings** – Please contact Audrey Serban of Fisher & Phillips at 908-516-1061.

**Educational Workshops** – Please contact Robbin Dolan, CLM, of Laddey Clark & Ryan at 973-729-1880.

**NJALA Socials** – Please contact Jackie Pampinella of Fox Rothschild at 973-992-4800.

**ALA Webinars: Registration and general information is posted on the ALA site, [www.alanet.org/education/regconf/telesem.html](http://www.alanet.org/education/regconf/telesem.html).**



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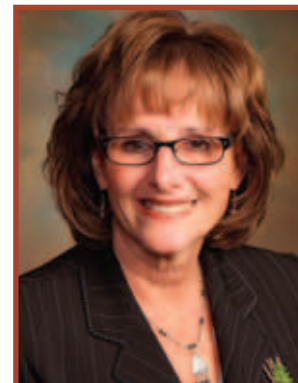
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BY MARY ELLEN DOLAN AND NANCY FOSINA



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(Continued on page 36)



## Presenting Our Business Partners

(Continued from page 35)

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## HATCHES, MATCHES & DISPATCHES

BY CINDY LANDIS

Summer months allow all of us to take a deep breath and relax. I personally enjoy spending time by the water. For others, it means more time indoors to keep cool. My husband, Phil, and I completed our master bathroom project which we began in January, so it was time for us to relax. We were able to take a trip to our favorite place, the Outer Banks in North Carolina.

And for a personal announcement of my own...my son, Steven, who completed his first year at Quinnipiac School of Law, is spending his summer working for the ACLU and the Connecticut Attorney General's Office. He divides his time between both, and is having the "time of his life" attending depositions, going to court, researching, etc. He enjoys getting up in the morning to go to work—that's what it's all about. Yes, I will finally not only be working for attorneys, but will have one in my own family.

My daughter, Carol, is happily living on the Eastern Shore of Maryland with her new husband, John. Some of us can remember the first year of married life...enough said on that subject.

And now for some announcements from our friends....



*Tandy's graduation photo*

**Teri Siegle (Ansell Grimm & Aaron)** is all smiles. Her daughter, Tandy, graduated from Ocean Township High School and will be attending Fairleigh Dickinson University, Madison Campus, in the fall. She has plans to become an elementary school teacher. To celebrate this momentous occasion, plans have been made for the family to take a two-

week trip in the beginning of August to California. They will be spending a week in the San Francisco area and a week in the San Diego area.



*Jean Serpico's  
new granddaughter,  
Kaitlyn Jean*

**Jean Serpico (Waters, McPherson, McNeill)** has become a first time grandma! Kaitlyn Jean was born on June 19, 2012. She weighed in at 8 lbs.11oz. So blessed! Enjoy every minute!

spent their honeymoon 40 years ago (anyone remember Eastern Airlines?). If Karen Steinberger allows BAM the time off, the plan is to do it again in another 40 years, and maybe a few times in between as well.



*The Merer Lovebirds*



*Joanne's parents on their  
wedding day*

**Joanne O'Beirne (Wolkstein, Von Ellen & Brown)** reports that her parents, Joan A. and James A. O'Beirne, Sr., just celebrated their 59<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on June 18<sup>th</sup>. Plans are being made for a "big" celebration next year for their 60<sup>th</sup>. And a little added tidbit, yes, everyone in the family has the same initials. That includes her parents, three brothers and Joanne. You must be so proud!

**Helen Lysaght** reports that her firm has changed their name to **McManimon, Scotland & Baumann, LLC**, effective June 1<sup>st</sup>. They also moved from its former Newark location to 75 Livingston Avenue in Roseland. Enjoy the 'burbs, Helen!

*(Continued on page 39)*



**Hatches Matches & Dispatches***(Continued from page 38)**Dr. Amanda Henry*

Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany, reported on Wednesday the research that supported their

**Ron Henry (Wilentz Goldman & Spitzer)** is happy to share some great news regarding his daughter, Amanda. In June, she was lead author of a unique study which was published in *Nature*. This is a quote from the *NY Times* article: “An international team of scientists led by Amanda G. Henry of the Max Planck

findings. Their paper was published online by the journal *Nature* and will appear later in a printed edition.” This article was in the German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* with a current profile photo of Amanda and the skull: <http://www.spiegel.de/wissenschaft/mensch/fruehmensch-hat-baumrinde-gege>.

Til next quarter, enjoy the rest of the summer!

*Cindy Landis is the Office Administrator of Gennet Kallmann Antin & Robinson in Parsippany*

## NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

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## Q & A: TODAY

BY ANITA SETARO



### In the spirit of the Olympic Games, what makes your firm a Gold Medal winner?

**Joanne O'Beirne of Wolkstein, Von Ellen & Brown, LLC:** We all work together as a team and help each other out to get the end result.

**Karen Steinberger of Saiber, LLC:** Upholding our continuing practice of mutual respect, professionalism, good lawyers, and financial conservatism has kept a Gold Medal winner for years!

**Barbara Hughes of Littler Mendelson, P.C.:** Being the best at what we do.

**Elli Albert of Berman, Sauter, Record & Jardim, P.C.:** Our office culture is very relaxed, casual, and often fun (even though we can't always say the same about the work!).

We also acknowledge that our employees' families come first. From my personal perspective, we had a fantastic managing partner for 30+ years, and his recent successor is also doing a tremendous job.

**Jim Van Leir of Epstein Brown & Gioia, LLC:** Concern for the staff. Even while downsizing and going through a year or so of hard financial times, the Managing Partner did not reduce salary or benefits for the employees of the firm.



**Ed Miller of Norris McLaughlin & Marcus, PA:** Norris McLaughlin & Marcus is a Gold Medal winning law firm because of the great culture in which we work. Everyone, from management to senior partners to staff, are all respected and treated equally. We have received several awards for being among the Best Places to Work in New Jersey, and I believe our positive work environment is the primary reason for those rewards.

*Anita Setaro is the Office Manager of Duane Morris, LLP, in Newark*





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