

Equal Access

Volume 4, Issue 1, 2010

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Lawyer In The Library At Contra Costa County

Two byproducts of our downturned economy are an increase in the number of self-represented litigants (SRL's) in California courts, and a decrease in the services available to assist such individuals. This has been extremely apparent in the Bay area communities in Contra Costa County. Armed with a commitment to expanding services and striving to meet the needs of our users, especially the underserved, the Contra Costa County Public Law Library decided to offer a Lawyer in the Library clinic for unrepresented persons. In January of 2010 the law library held its first Lawyer in the Library clinic. Two volunteer attorneys saw a total of five people. In February, 15 people signed in for the clinic, and in March, we had 12 people attend. The clinic works on first come, first served basis. Participants are asked to sign in and sign a Hold-Harmless Agreement and a form indicating the nature of their legal problem(s) or question(s). Clinic attendees are told that the attorney will not become their lawyer, and that the clinic is intended to help them help themselves. They are also told that lawyer-client confidentiality does not apply. The attorneys work with the library staff to assist the person in the best possible manner. Referrals are also made to the county bar association and to other sources of help.

Lawyer in the Library meets the second Tuesday of every month in the law library's conference room. The only restriction is that attendees must be self-represented. If the person has an attorney, he or she is ineligible to be seen. There are no restrictions on the types of questions. Three months into the project we are thrilled at how smoothly the program

is going. Clearly there was a serious need for such a clinic. Fortunately the law library was able to meet this need. We owe a special debt of gratitude to the Congress of Neutrals for helping make Lawyer in the Library a reality.

Santa Clara Law Library Book Signing

"On Thursday, February 4th, Santa Clara County Law Library hosted a book signing party, celebrating the publication of "Santa Clara County Law Library: Its History" by local retired Judge Mark E. Thomas. About 60-70 people attended the celebration. Among them: current and former board of trustees, current and retired judicial officers, current and former employees and some of their families, and local law librarians.

Thanks to the support from the Friends of Santa Clara County Law Library, the guests are welcomed by excellent catering and refreshments.

The book details the history of the Santa Clara County Law Library from its humble origin in 1874, the 2nd oldest in the state of California, serving all of 34 attorneys in the whole county, to its current incarnation as a modern, thriving public law library serving judges, county officials, attorneys, students and self-representing litigants a-like. Completed with rarely seen historical photographs, and interviews with current staff and families of former staffs, it documented the law library's growth over the year. Current staff learned a lot about the library's history, the successes, the triumphs, the occasional setbacks and tragedies from this project."

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County Law
Libraries

Open to the
Public

Established in
1891

Governed by a
Board of
Trustees

Funded by a
Portion of Court
Filing Fees

*Newsletter of the
Council of California
County Law Librarians*



San Mateo County Annual Community Law Night

San Mateo County Public Law Library will be participating as a resource table at the San Mateo County Superior Court annual Community Law Night on Thursday, May 6, 2010, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the Hall of Justice & Records in Redwood City. Attorney members of the San Mateo County Bar Association and local service providers will provide legal assistance to those in attendance. Short seminars and lectures will also be presented. For more information visit: www.sanmateocourt.org.

Sacramento's "Lawyers in the Law Library"

"Lawyers in the Law Library" offers free 20-minute consultations at the Sacramento County Public Law Library every Monday night from 6:00-7:30 p.m. "Lawyers in the Law Library" program contributes to the Sacramento legal community's effort to help people who cannot afford private legal services by coordinating and facilitating brief access to advice and referral from local attorneys serving pro bono.

Alameda

Landlord-Tenant Law: Tuesday, December 8, 2009 (12:00 Noon - 1:30 p.m.) (MCLE)

Kern

Family Law: Presenting Your Case in Court; Order to Show Cause; Child Custody and Child Visitation: Mondays and Wednesdays (8:30 - 11:00 a.m. & 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.) (Note: Wednesday p.m. class in Spanish)

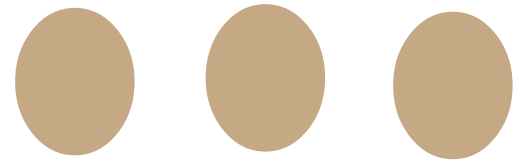
Guardianship Self Help Clinic: Getting Started, Objections, Fix Notes, Visitation, and Termination Mondays (9:30-11:00 a.m.) & Tuesdays (10:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.)

Small Claims Public Workshop for Self-Represented Litigants: Mondays (11:15 a.m.- 12:15 p.m.)

How To Prepare Your Answer to An Unlawful Detainer (Tenants): Tuesdays & Thursdays (10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.)

Kern County Law Day

The Kern County Law Library, Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance and the Kern County Bar Association will be holding "Law Day at the Mall" on April 21, 2010 from 1:00 - 7:00 p.m. Attendees will be able to speak to an attorney for 15 minutes in six legal areas: bankruptcy/foreclosure, criminal law, probate/estate planning, family law, real property/landlord rentals and tenant rentals. In addition, staff from the Kern County Child Support, the Law Library, GBLA and the BBB mediation program will be present during the entire event to answer questions and screen for clients eligible for further free legal services in the areas of guardianship, expungements, answering creditor lawsuits and other areas.



Upcoming Workshops

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Kern (Continued)

Divorce Default Self Help Clinic-Getting Started, Objections, Checking Papers, & Fixing Pinks
Tuesdays & Thursdays (1:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m.)

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

How To Begin The Eviction Process (Landlords): Wednesdays (11:00 a.m. -12:00 Noon)

Orange County

How To Answer An Unlawful Detainer (Eviction) Case: Thursdays (9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.)

Criminal Dismissal (Expungement): First Thursday and Third Tuesday of each month (starting
Tuesday, March 16, 2010) (2:00 - 5:00 p.m.)

Riverside

Family Law, Every 2nd Monday & Wednesday of each month (5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.)

Sacramento *All workshops are held at the Sacramento County Public Law Library, 813 Sixth
Street, Second Floor. Go to www.saclaw.org to register using Visa or Master Card online.*

Getting More from Google: Tips for Legal Professionals, Wednesday, March 24, 2010 (2:30
- 4:30 p.m.) Registration Fee: \$30.00. No MCLE Credit.

Microsoft WORD 2007 for Legal Professionals:Part C:Track Changes, Macros, Restricted
Viewing/Permissions, Encrypting & PDFs & Mail Merge Functions :Wednesday, March 24,
2010 (6:00-8:00p.m.) Registration Fee: \$65.00. 2 Hours MCLE Credit.

Microsoft Power Point 2007 for the Legal Presentations: Friday, April 2, 2010 (1:00-4:30
p.m.) Registration Fee: \$75.00. 3.5 Hours MCLE Credit.

Westlaw: Secrets of the Super Searchers: Wednesday, May 7, 2010 (2:30-4:30 p.m.)
Registration Fee: \$30.00. 2 Hours MCLE Credit.

Introduction to Legal Forms & Pleadings: Friday, May 12, 2010 (2:00-4:00 p.m.)
Registration Fee: \$30.00. 2 Hours MCLE Credit.

Introduction to Legal Research & Law Library Basics: Saturday, June 5, 2010 (Part A:
Statutes 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.) Registration Fee: \$15.00. (Part B: Cases 1:00 - 3:30 p.m.)
Registration Fee: \$15.00. No MCLE Credit.

San Diego-Main *Workshops are free for SDCPLL Members, \$5.00 Non-Members*

Using Westlaw: March 22, 2010 (12:00 - 1:00 p.m.)

Free Legal Clinic: March 24, 2010, March 24, 2010, and April 7, 2010 (1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.)

Practical Legal Research: March 27, 2010 (2:00-4:00 p.m.)

Free Tax Clinic: April 28, 2010, May 26, 2010, and June 30, 2010 (2:00-4:00 p.m.)

San Diego-South Bay Branch

Using Hein Online & Legal Trac: March 23, 2010 (12:00 - 1:00 p.m.)

San Mateo *(Noontime Lectures Series)*

(All lectures begin at 12 noon and are free)

Bankruptcy, March 11, 2010

The Divorce Process: Filing to Final Judgment, April 8

Estate Planning for the Divorced Client, May 13

Self-represented Litigant Class, Mondays 1:30 p.m. (Eng)

Your Guide to Small Claims Court, Tuesdays 9:00 a.m. (Spanish), Thursdays 2:30 p.m.
(Eng)

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