

# ALA Region 6 Council Meeting Minutes

Marriott Hotel, Boston, MA

Sunday, May 2, 2010

## Welcome and Introductions

The meeting convened at 1:17 PM. Incoming Region 6 Director, Steve Morris, CLM thanked everyone for attending, especially considering the beautiful weather outside.

The Regional Team introduced themselves:

Patti Groff, CLM, Outgoing Region 6 Director and Chair, Couture for a Cause event to be held at this year's combined Region 5/6 Conference in San Diego

Steve Morris, CLM, Incoming Region 6 Director/Outgoing Projects Officer

Doris Alexander, CLM, Education Chair

Brian Matter, CLM, Incoming Projects Officer

Timi Cereghino, CLM Outgoing Communications Officer

Matthew Ogden, Incoming Communications Officer

Chapters represented at the Council Meeting:

East Bay

Golden Gate

Golden Gate

Greater Los Angeles

Las Vegas

Orange County

Sacramento Valley

San Diego

Silicon Valley

Tucson/Old Pueblo

Valley of the Sun

Not in attendance:

Central Valley

New Zealand

Steve Morris announced that at some point during the meeting, we would be visited by some ALA dignitaries including the new Executive Director Larry Smith, Immediate Past President Wendy Rice-Isaacs, outgoing President Susan French Koran and President-Elect Rita Alli.

Steve introduced the ice breaker, ALAGO! The group was asked to mingle and find persons who fit various criteria on a bingo card (i.e., someone who had bungee-jumped). There would be two winners: The first person to obtain a “bingo” (straight across, diagonal or four corners) and the first person to obtain a “blackout” of all the squares. The group was highly enthusiastic during the exercise. The first bingo was achieved by Ken Sockolov, CLM (Sacramento Valley). In the interest of time, the game was not played to the “blackout” stage.

## **Minutes of the September 24, 2009 Regional Council Meeting (Rohnert Park)**

Timi Cereghino alerted everyone to the fact that the Regional Council minutes from September 2009 Regional Council meeting held in Rohnert Park, CA were placed at each table. She also reminded everyone that Regional Council minutes are always available on the ALA website under “Chapter Resources.” Matt Ogden will email a link to the September 2009 minutes to all the Chapter Presidents.

### **Share the Past**

Steve Morris asked chapters to share a successful program, mailing, approach or event that was tried for the first time this year. Sacramento Valley announced that they had increased their annual dues and eliminated the meeting fee for lunches to increase attendance at these meetings.

At this point, the ALA dignitaries arrived. Susan French Koran thanked everyone for a great year and then she, Larry, Wendy and Rita sat in the back of the room and listened as the meeting continued with more chapters sharing their successful initiatives:

Silicon Valley started a CLM group for the first time and created a Director of Certification position for their board. They also had a managing partner forum for the first time.

Silicon Valley also offered 20 scholarships to the September 2009 Region 6 Conference in Rohnert Park since the conference location was close enough that most of their members could drive to attend. The scholarship paid for registration and one night hotel stay. The large number of attendees from this Chapter resulted in more sponsorship from the Silicon Valley Business Partners and it also resulted in more volunteering and participation of Silicon Valley Chapter members on the current 2010 Board.

San Diego introduced a Diversity Program for the first time with an evening program and social where the speakers included a judge and the General Counsel of Sony. The Iranian Bar Association asked to partner with the San Diego Chapter for the first time. The Legal Recruiting Association, Chapter Business Partners and the San Diego Bar Association were also invited to attend.

Golden Gate sent a thank you letter to members when they renewed. This letter included a listing of all the Chapter Business Partners. The President and President-Elect sent an e-mail to the membership asking for volunteers for the open board positions which were listed in the e-mail. This resulted in SEVEN new chapter members serving in 2010 Board positions.

The Las Vegas Chapter revised their business partner sponsorship programs. Chapter members were asked for names of vendors they used in order to solicit new Business Partners. This was largely due to the efforts of Brian Matter.

The Greater Los Angeles Chapter focused on their "members in transition." Every month there was a speaker on a topic of interest to members in transition (i.e., updating your resume, etc.). They also worked with out of work members so they could continue as members despite the fact they were unemployed at the moment.

The Valley of the Sun Chapter had their first holiday party at a premier hotel. It was held in the evening. 40% of members attended. The party was free to members.

## **Share the Future**

Doris Alexander, CLM asked Chapters to share what is currently going on or coming up within their Chapters this Board year.

The Valley of the Sun Chapter is setting up a website for members to update their own information.

Tucson/Old Pueblo Chapter is creating their first website. This announcement prompted Susan French Koran to mention Star Chapter, which is a website program specifically designed for associations. While it may not be viable for all size Chapters, it is a very cost effective (about \$100 a month) for some.

The Valley of the Sun Chapter mentioned that one of their Business Partner sponsorship options is sponsoring the cost of annual website maintenance.

Tucson/Old Pueblo mentioned that it is important for chapters to have their own websites in order to promote themselves. Patricia Kucharski of the Tucson Chapter shared that she joined the Association years before she joined her local chapter simply because she was not aware the Chapter existed!

This prompted discussion on how to solicit new members. Susan Bonner (Golden Gate Chapter) stressed that personal phone calls are better than e-mails when reaching out to members and prospective members.

Greater Los Angeles Chapter asked their Business Partners to help them with membership recruitment. It was mentioned that Business Partners often have relationships with their clients who may not be ALA members. Business Partners are in

the perfect situation to refer prospective members to ALA. Greater Los Angeles offers a prize to the Business Partner who has referred the most new members over the course of a year. In order to entice new members, Greater Los Angeles offers the first year of Chapter membership free to new members.

The Silicon Valley Chapter spearheaded a “Best of...” listing and asked that Administrators (rather than lawyers) refer the best legal vendors for various products and services.

The Las Vegas Chapter contacted Reno-based members of the Association to join the Las Vegas Chapter. The physical distance between the two cities presents some challenges. As such they continue to fine tune ways of getting more participation from these members. Beginning in May 2010, a Business Partner will record the Las Vegas Board meeting and then make it available for Reno members for replay.

Doris then asked if any Chapters had created new Board positions:

The Silicon Valley Chapter has a new CLM Chair;

The San Diego Chapter has created a Diversity Chair and a Transition Chair;

The Greater Los Angeles Chapter hired a Chapter Manager who will focus on membership and the Business Partners. This person will focus on member recruitment and then meeting member needs. The candidate chosen had previously done similar tasks for a professional speakers association. The position is part-time.

Doris then asked if any Chapters had “themes” for their Board year:

“Better Together” (Orange County) will seek to have good participation at their retreat and to activate past presidents.

“Plug in and Get Connected” (Greater Los Angeles) will seek to use technology to link people to attend meetings.

“Setting the State for Success” (\_\_\_\_\_ Chapter).

At this point, Steve introduced Sabine Curto who had joined the meeting. Sabine is the incoming At-Large Director for Regions 4 and 6. She is from the Capitol (Washington, DC area) Chapter. She is taking over from outgoing At-Large Director, Steve Wingert, CLM.

## **Board Meetings and Structure; Succession Plans**

Matt Ogden then began a discussion of Chapter Board meetings and Board structures/organization. It soon became obvious that there were many varied Board Structures. Some Chapters had full Boards (Executive Officers and Committee Chairs

and Co-Chairs) while others considered only their Executive or voting members to be “board members.”

It also became readily apparent that different Chapters scheduled their Board meetings at different times of the day. For example, Valley of the Sun holds their Board meetings early in the morning (7 or 7:30 AM) before the work day, while others, such as Golden Gate, hold their meetings at lunch time. Still others, such as Greater Los Angeles and Orange County, hold their meetings after working hours so that members do not feel pressured to get back to the office. Often times it was the geography of the region which dictated when meetings were being held. For example, Los Angeles, being spread out, found it difficult to have a lunch meeting due to the travel time for members. Golden Gate, where most members work downtown, found that lunch meetings worked best for them.

All Chapters agreed that providing food provided an incentive for members to attend.

With regard to Board succession, Chapters had slight variations when it came to picking their Presidents. Some Chapters insist that their President have previously served in all other Executive Board positions (Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-President). Some chapters have both a Vice President (who may or may not become a future President) and a President-Elect (who succeeds to the Presidency). Some chapters, such as Golden Gate, require that the Immediate Past President remain on as an At-Large position on the Board for continuity’s sake.

All Chapters agreed that in these challenging economic times it has become harder to get the volunteerism necessary to have a strong Board with good succession plans. Members are feeling pressured to give and do more for their firms which, in turn, leaves them less time for volunteering with ALA.

## **Region 6 Scholarships**

Brian Matter then spoke on Region 6 scholarships being awarded this year to various ALA conferences including Chapter Leadership Institute (CLI), the Region 5/6 Conference in San Diego and the 2011 Annual Conference in Orlando, FL.

*NEW CLI scholarship:* This year, for the first time, Region 6 is offering a scholarship to attend the Chapter Leadership Institute being held in Las Vegas, NV, June 25-27. Chapters with the most need or who would not otherwise be sending a representative will get preference. Chapters who wish to apply should send an e-mail to Steve Morris by May 15, 2010. The e-mail should include a description of need/reason for applying. The Region 6 Team reserves the right to not award a scholarship if no Chapter in need applies.

*Region 5/6 Regional Conference Scholarships:* Two Region 5/6 registration fees plus \$200 stipends will be awarded to two Region 6 chapters at the end of the Council meeting.

A third Region 5/6 registration fee and \$200 stipend will be given away to an individual at the newcomers' reception being held later that afternoon for first-time attendees. The winner must be present to win and must not have previously attended a regional conference in the past.

A fourth Region 5/6 registration fee will be given away to an individual in the Exhibit Hall on Monday, May 3 at 12:45PM. The Region 5 and 6 teams will be at the ALA Booth between noon and 1PM with promotional items and various prizes to be given to those in the crowd. The winner must be present to win!

*2010 Annual Conference in Orlando, FL* : Two annual conference registrations plus \$400 stipends will be awarded to two Region 6 Chapters at the September 30, 2010 Regional Council meeting in San Diego.

At this point, the drawing was held for the two Region 5/6 Conference registrations and stipends. The two Chapters whose names were drawn were Orange County and Silicon Valley. The alternate Chapter drawn was Golden Gate.

## **Future Conferences**

Patti Groff then talked about upcoming conferences:

*Region 5/6 Conference (September 30 – October 2, 2010, San Diego)*: Patti stressed that everyone make sure his or her chapter members take note that the keynote will take place on *THURSDAY EVENING at 5PM* and that attendees should make their travel plans accordingly. This differs from past years when the keynote was held on Friday morning. Additionally, the CLM exam will be held on Thursday afternoon (September 30), as will the Regional Council Meeting and the meeting of the Regional Nominating Committee. The keynote speaker is Sarah Reinertsen who is the first female above the knee amputee to compete at Iron Man Kona. She was on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* and she was featured on CBS' *Amazing Race*. She will also be participating as a model in the "Couture for a Cause" event which will follow the keynote. "Couture" will serve as the welcome reception for the conference. It is also a fundraiser and one of the San Diego Chapter's Community Challenge events. The cost of attending this event is rolled into the registration fee for the conference. It is also funded by contributions from business partners and other legal professional associations (since this is also the Professional Legal Management Week event for the San Diego Chapter).

There will also be a silent auction during Couture for a Cause. Region 5 always has a silent auction at their regional conference and since we are partnering with them this year, it was decided that we will have an auction at our joint conference this year. Chapters will be asked to donate items, although participation is optional. The Regional Team will also be donating an item for the silent auction.

There will also be a 5K walk/run for Friday of the Region 5/6 Conference. This is being organized by the host chapter (San Diego). It is free for attendees.

Patti reminded everyone that the conference has a rock and roll theme (since it is being held at the Hard Rock, San Diego).

*Annual Conference, Orlando, FL, May 23-26* : Patti reminded the attendees to mark their calendars for next year's annual conference.

At this point Steve Wingert, CLM joined the meeting. Steve is the outgoing Region 6 At-Large Director. He is filling Karen Griggs' position as At-Large Director since Karen will assume the President-Elect role for the Association on Tuesday, May 4, 2010.

## **Association Nominating Committee (ANC) and Regional Nominating Committee (RNC)**

Steve Morris then spoke on the ANC/RNC. He briefly explained the Regional Officer, Director and Executive Officer succession within the Association. He thanked Patti Groff for her dedication, guidance, leadership and friendship as the outgoing Region 6 Director. He also thanked Timi Cereghino, CLM, Region 6 Communications Officer, who is going off the team.

The Association Nominating Committee (ANC) does due diligence on nominees to the ALA Board of Directors and Executive Officers. Steve announced that the Region 6 team has recommended Lisa Mitzel as the Region 6 representative to the Association Nominating Committee. Steve asked if anyone else had suggestions for this position.

The Regional Nominating Committee does due diligence on nominees for ALA Regional Officer positions. The Region 6 Team has recommended Pam Kuckelman (Orange County) as Chair, Lucy Frederick (San Diego), Linda Brady (East Bay) and Candace Canton (Tucson/Old Pueblo) to serve on the Committee. Steve announced that we are still looking for volunteers for this committee from chapters who do not already have a representative on the slate.

Steve reminded everyone that members can nominate anyone to an Officer, Director or Executive Office position whom they feel is qualified and whom they would support to serve on these committees. Members do NOT have to get the permission of their nominee. ALA has a due diligence procedure which takes care of that. Steve did qualify his comments by saying that you cannot serve on the committee and then be considered for a position on the Regional or Executive Team simultaneously.

## **Focus Chapters**

Steve pointed out that the Regional Team members have each been assigned Focus Chapters:

Central Valley (Brian Matter)

East Bay (Doris Alexander)  
Golden Gate (Sabine Curto)  
Greater Los Angeles (Doris Alexander)  
Las Vegas (Doris Alexander)  
Orange County (Matt Ogden)  
Sacramento Valley (Brian Matter)  
San Diego (Steve Morris)  
Silicon Valley (Matt Ogden)  
Tucson-Old Pueblo (Brian Matter)  
Valley of the Sun (Steve Morris)  
New Zealand (Steve Morris)

However, Chapter members are welcome to contact anyone on the Regional Team with any questions or concerns.

## **ALA Update**

Sabine Curto then provided a brief ALA update.

*New Executive Director* : Sabine reiterated that Larry Smith has taken over for the retiring John Michalik as ALA's Executive Director. Sabine feels that Larry has been an excellent choice so far.

*Horizon and Beyond (ALA Strategic Plan)*: Sabine directed everyone to review the ALA Strategic Plan which can be found as a link on the bottom left hand corner of the [www.alanet.org](http://www.alanet.org) website. It was also published in the Region 6 newsletter. Among those ideas expressed in the Strategic Plan are:

- Renewed commitment to serve our target audience
- Improved delivery of knowledge
- Providing High Value Resources
- Identifying volunteers
- Developing a principal administrator/managing partner event or retreat

*Social Networking and Technology* : Sabine was pleased to announce that ALA is now present on LinkedIn, Twitter (@alabuzz) and Facebook ("Be a Fan of ALA"). Tweets on the ALA conference will be appear on the message board during conference week so that members who are unable to attend the conference can still follow the week's events.

Sabine also announced that there are now mobile apps for Blackberry, iPhone and other smart phones. These can be downloaded at [alanet.org/conf/2010/mobile.html](http://alanet.org/conf/2010/mobile.html).

*International focus*: The Association continues its goal of providing more info and resources for firms interested in expanding in south Asia and China. A live conference focusing on this topic is being planned in Chicago in early 2011.

*SHRM Credit* : Sabine announced that attendees can now can get SHRM accreditation for sessions held during the ALA Conference. Anyone interested in SHRM accreditation should check with Vic Mauer or Rosemary Shiels for more information.

The meeting adjourned at 3:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew S. Ogden,  
Region 6 Communications Chair