Creating a Marketing Culture within a Firm

By Ed Miller and Madlen Miller

A firm's culture is essentially the "way of life" in the work environment. Factors that shape the culture of a firm include dress code, job titles, behavioral policies, and even the gender or ethnic diversity of the work force. Every workplace has an established culture, whether it is intentional or not. The Walt Disney Company is famous for its company culture that requires every single employee to contribute to a positive guest experience, thereby creating satisfied and loyal customers. Disney employees are trained, and trained again, to live and breathe this culture established by Walt Disney himself.

Obviously the "Disney Way" may not be appropriate or attainable for your firm, but centralizing your firm's goals around a "marketing culture" can help you to align your efforts and create successes. A marketing culture is the level of belief that the ultimate purpose of the business is to create superior customer value and profitability with an overarching focus on markets and clients. The following factors can shape your firm's culture to reflect this ideal.

Client-focused work ethic

This includes a combination of attitudes, behaviors, tools and practices established to understand what your clients need, and how to provide the highest quality of services in the most efficient manner. Evaluate the current culture and structure of the firm, and utilize what tools you may already have to re-align the focus from internal to external. Do you offer customer service training? Use these programs to educate your staff on phone etiquette, enforce the importance of response times, and provide general client interaction techniques. Create a customer service manual to use as a guide for training sessions and distribute to all employees to keep as a reference guide. One helpful tool that could facilitate a more client-friendly environment is a contact management database to help manage client information. If you already have a database, be sure it is being used to its fullest potential. See if your database offers a tracking tool for client prospects. While checking conflicts is necessary, you never want to sue a significant potential client. Customer surveys can also serve as a valuable tool to determine their level of satisfaction clients derive from your firm's services.

Positive firm image

Every act by your firm and its employees influences public perception. It is the responsibility of all your employees to uphold your firm in a positive light. This means not only being fair and honest with clients, and willing to help them at all times; but also answering the phone with a friendly tone or even holding the elevator. What is the current image of your firm? Does it need to be improved? If so, start internally. Evaluate and improve your internal processes to reflect an optimistic and positive atmosphere. Once you have established internal positivity, look to your local community for ways to improve the firm image externally. This doesn't mean just throwing money at local charities. Get your staff and attorneys physically involved by serving on boards and volunteering. The more committed your employees are to upholding the firm image, the easier it will be to improve.

Incentivize your employees

Incentives should not be seen as rewards but rather as encouragement of desired behaviors within your firm. Survey the needs and wants of your employees and see what kinds of incentives will be effective. Use these tools with all of your workers to enforce responsibility for customer care while retaining a positive work environment. Incentives could be monetary or they could just mean being praised publically in front of the entire firm. While tangible incentives are effective, intangible rewards have more staying power and will ultimately result in continuous desired behavior.

Awareness of competition

Marketers call it the SWOT method: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Evaluate your firm based on these four factors; you should have at least one item to list in each category. This will help you identify who your competition is, and how they may threaten your firm's success. Not only evaluate what your opportunities are, but develop plans on how to turn those opportunities into successes. Whether you find your firm's weaknesses to be internal or external, make an effort to remedy them before they become your Achilles' heel. You may find that you are better or stronger than your competition on paper, but if you don't market yourself as the best, then your efforts will be fruitless. Disseminating your SWOT results internally is central to your "re-culturing" efforts. Enlist skilled marketing/publicity professionals to publicize your firm's strengths externally a regular basis.

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Creating a Marketing Culture

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Firm marketing budget

Dedicate firm resources to invest in marketing. As you very well know, nothing is free. If you desire to create a marketing culture within your firm, you must allot the appropriate resources to do so. The industry standard is to allocate 2-4% of revenue to a marketing budget. This theory can be applied to your overall annual marketing budget, or to each individual client. Budgeted expenses can include client-requested donations, firm-sponsored events, and entertainment. Do not expect one-dollar out, one-dollar in. Many marketing expenditures may have only intangible results. Just because you buy Yankees tickets for a client, that doesn't mean he's going to bill an equal or greater value the next day. A marketing budget is an investment that will benefit you in the end; it will just take time to earn interest.

Individual marketing budgets

Every attorney should have a marketing budget as well, even if it is a small one. To maintain controls, have your marketing team or office manager track expenses, using a review system to keep expenditures in check. This will encourage responsibility for individual marketing and for building a positive image of the firm. This sense of accountability will also trickle-down to the staff as well.

Measure your success

Create tools to evaluate and measure all marketing efforts. Acknowledging successes internally will encourage the marketing culture within your firm. These tools will also help you to establish your budgets for marketing funds. As mentioned above, track your marketing budget. This will ensure you are investing in marketing tools that are worthwhile. Monitor your website for traffic patterns. Did traffic to a specific area increase two weeks after you sent out a press release? This is important information you should have. Log the origin of each client. Did they call after attending a free seminar you hosted? If you implement the correct tools, you may be surprised to find that some of your cold calls aren't so cold.

Each of these seven factors is significant to creating your firm's marketing culture. It is essential for managers to embrace this culture and lead by example. Talking the talk won't cut it. This may entail hosting training sessions for management before implementing anything with employees. Focus on individuals who implement these initiatives, and advertise their successes internally. The confidence of each individual will spread throughout the firm, and will help to build a successful firm culture.

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and Madlen Miller is the Marketing Coordinator,
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What's New in Your Office?

NJALA's Annual Equipment and Office Services Survey—The Results are In

By Lisa J. Cuffari, CLM

Our annual Equipment and Office Services Survey has been completed and distributed electronically to the NJALA members who participated. This was our first year doing the survey through an on-line source, SurveyMonkey, and we are happy with the results.

This article will provide a summary of the responses received, and, if you were unable to participate this year, encourage you to be a part of this annual event next year. We are always moving forward and upgrading our systems and equipment as new technology becomes available and affordable. Whether your firm is large, small, or medium in size, you will certainly benefit from keeping abreast of the latest technology options available to make your firms more cost effective, and to keep your employees trained and their skill sets up to date.

Demographics

Of the responding administrators, 50 percent represented firms of less than 25 attorneys, and 50 percent represented firms employing more than 26 attorneys. Almost 13 percent employed more than 75 attorneys, and 19 percent employed less than 10 attorneys.

Do we have IT staff on our payroll? Yes, and no. Interestingly, 43 percent of the responding firms do not employ a dedicated information technology professional. These firms instead rely on outsourced business partners/help desks for network, computer and software support needs. Approximately 26 percent of our responding firms have one IT professional on staff, 11 percent have two, 7 percent have three, and 11 percent have more than three.

The equipment survey provides additional demographic information, including number of employees, paralegals, secretaries, finance department staff, billing and collections staff, and other staff (such as librarians, receptionists, and office services clerks).

The Basics

The majority of our responding firms continue to use analog dictation equipment (60%) although 17% now use digital dictation equipment, and 26.5% use a combination of both analog and digital. For those using digital, the software supporting this equipment is most often Winscribe, with some firms relying on Olympus and/or Dragon Naturally Speaking.

Our mailrooms utilize Pitney Bowes (65%), Neopost (33%), and Francotyp Postalia (FP) machines.

We show more variety in our fax machine choices, where both Xerox and Canon came in at 33.3%, Ricoh at 24.5%, Panasonic at 13%, and Muratec at 8%.

Likewise, we like several copier/multi function device manufacturers. Xerox continues to hold the highest market share at 36%, with Canon and Ricoh coming in second and third, followed by Konica, Savin and Lanier.

A different picture emerges for our printers—94% of our documents are printed on HP printers, 9% on Xerox, 2% on Dell, and 1.9% on Lexmark. Obviously, most of our firms have more than one type of printer, but we rely mainly on Hewlett Packard, the leader in the printer market.

For cost recovery systems and software, which allow firms to track photocopies, prints, scans, fax transmissions. and long distance telephone calls—either for the purpose of passing these costs back to clients or for accounting purposes—our primary business partners are Equitrac and Copitrak. nQueue Billback is also a provider of note, along with Danyl card readers, ImageWare and Savin. We don't generally track our long distance phone calls—64% of respondents said they don't, but for those who do, Equitrac is most often the provider.

Who provides long distance service to our law firms? The majority of you say Verizon, with Optimum, Comcast (cable), and AT&T following the pack. Telephone system providers include Paetec, Qwest, Broadview Networks, Cooperative Communications, Optimum, Comcast, Siemens, Cisco, etc. and 38% of our firms are now using VoIP technology.

Software Systems—Business

Our firms are run on various software systems for accounting, bookkeeping, record keeping, document management, file management, etc. Some providers cater to larger practices, some to smaller. With that in mind, you will need to examine the survey to see what firms of your size, in particular, are using. The most used accounts payable and accounts receivable software programs are provided by Elite and TABS, followed by Rainmaker, PC Law, Quickbooks and Juris. The most popular timekeeping and billing software is TABS (33%) followed by Rainmaker, Elite, Aderant and Juris.

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What's New in Your Office?

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We also prefer ADP for our payroll provider, with Paychex the closest competitor. Ceridian and Balance Point are also in the mix.

Employee Benefits

If your firm offers a Flexible Spending Account to your employees, then you are in the majority of our respondents, with 64% saying they do. Many of these plans are administered by third party providers, rather than handled in house. We rely on Beneflex, Benefit Resources, Ameriflex, Aflac and Paychex to handle our FSAs.

Software-Systems—Legal

Law firms need to be secure in their calendaring, docketing and scheduling activities. There are many providers of software resources to make these tasks manageable. Our survey shows that 64% of responding firms rely on Microsoft Outlook, and 13.6% utilize PracticeMaster. Time Matters, Rainmaker, Elite, Amicus and CompuLaw are also in play. One firm in particular has custom software for these tasks. Again, I would urge you to obtain a copy of the Equipment Survey in order to see exactly what your colleagues are using and speak with individual administrators regarding their experience and recommendation of specific providers.

Conflict-checking software is an essential and ethical requirement for all law firms. Your malpractice carrier will continually stress the importance of identifying potential conflicts in the attorney-client relationship at the time of the initial meeting with a new client, or at the time a new matter is opened for an existing client. Your firm's case management software is often used as the tool to check for conflicts. However, particularly if your firm does not have document or case management software, there are other sources to check for potential problems, such as your attorney calendars and notes within electronic client files.

Not all firms use special software for conflict checking. You can create your own client database in Microsoft Word or Excel and then do a search/find within the chart or spreadsheet. Keep in mind that your conflict checking will only be as good as the information that has been put into your client database. Our administrators rely on several different software providers in this area: Elite was selected in our survey by almost 30% of respondents, 22% selected PracticeMaster, 18% use Rainmaker or Juris, and 3.7% use Needles or Worldox.

Case management software similarly draws information for docketing and calendaring into the same database containing client information. We utilize CaseMap more than any other software for this purpose, with PracticeMaster coming in second, and Time Matters and Needles each being used by 15% of our responding firms.

Document management software is not the same as case management software. Generally, it allows users to keep all documents and communications for specific client matters in electronic folders easily accessible by everyone at the firm. The most popular software for this purpose (in our survey) is Interwoven/iManage, followed by PC Docs, PracticeMaster, Worldox, Hummingbird, and Time Matters.

A word or two about word processing software. While 20% of our responding firms are preparing documents using Corel WordPerfect either solely or in conjunction with Microsoft Word, MS Word rules the day with an 80% market share. Over 50% of our firms have upgraded to Word 2007, and 9% have moved up to Word 2010. Interestingly, 40% are still using Word 2003—don't despair!

Other Survey Categories

The annual equipment survey includes questions regarding PC and network operating systems, server models, virtual networks, cloud computing, website design, anti-virus and spam protection, data back-up software and devices, etc. For any firm administrator looking to upgrade or change their current systems, the survey is an invaluable tool for making informed decisions based on the current marketplace and upon what other law firms are using and doing. Specific information is provided in the survey identifying website designers and hosts, outsourced IT professionals and other network consultants, internet access providers, phone system providers, etc.

The final three sections in this year's survey provide the names, addresses and telephone numbers of providers of the following services: messenger, outside copy/scanning, file storage, shredding, wiring, painting, cleaning, accounting, catering, and printing. There is not a single reference in my office that I use more often than our NJALA survey. It is easily searchable in Excel (saved your desktop) or in a print version on the side of your desk. The survey results are free to everyone who participates. The cost is $100.00 for all others. If you would like to receive a copy of the 2011 Equipment and Office Services Survey sent to you electronically, please contact me. To all of you who made this survey such a success, thank you for your time and energy!

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New Member Spotlight

Introducing Our Newest Members of NJALA

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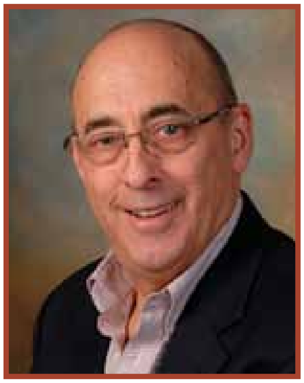


401(k) Changes Are Coming

By Donald K. Piermont, Jr., PHR

For some time now, 401(k) plans have been a popular vehicle for retirement savings. When the economy was booming, little attention was paid to the various costs associated with these plans. Employees were able to draw out substantially more than the sum of their deferrals, and, where applicable, their employers' contributions. Everyone was happy.

The economic slide we have been experiencing for the past three years has taken its toll on the value of 401(k) accounts. As employees watch their account balances diminish, they have asked why. One obvious reason is the decline in investment values, but that is not the whole story. Closer scrutiny reveals that the employee's account is also charged for some of the fees associated with the plan. There has been a marked lack of transparency regarding these costs, and it is hoped that some changes in reporting requirements will clear some of this up.

Until recently, most 401(k) plans had similar structures, known as Traditional Bundled Plans. There is an advisor, a mutual fund or insurance company, a plan sponsor (employer), and plan participants. Under these plans, the sponsor and those administering the plan on behalf of the sponsor (such as law firm administrators), have significant liability exposure. In addition, the plan participants had little idea of what back-end fees were actually being charged to or collected from them.

Following is a summary of The Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration's (EBSA) Final Rule to Improve Transparency of Fees and Expenses to Workers in 401(k)-Type Retirement Plans:

- Investment of plan assets is a fiduciary act which requires plan fiduciaries to act prudently and solely in the interest of the plan's participants and beneficiaries.

- When a plan allocates investment responsibilities to participants or beneficiaries, the plan administrator must assure participants and beneficiaries are made aware of their rights and responsibilities with respect to the investment of assets in their accounts and provided sufficient information regarding the plan and its investment options, including information on fees and expenses, to make informed decisions regarding their individual accounts.

- A plan administrator must provide certain plan-related and investment-related information, as described below, to each plan participant or beneficiary.

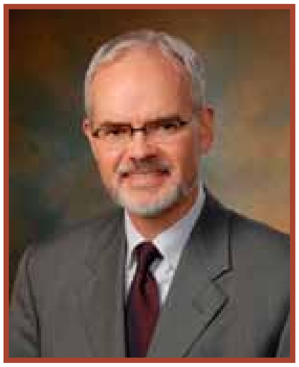
    - Plan-Related Information
    - Investment-Related Information
        - Performance Data
        - Benchmark Information
        - Fee and Expense Information
        - Internet Web Site Address
        - Glossary

401(k) vendors should be ready to provide the required information to plan participants by the April 1, 2012, deadline. The plan's sponsor, the employer, can be held liable if the information is not provided. In many cases, the firm and the individual administrator of the plan can share this liability, so it would be prudent to contact vendors soonest to confirm they will be complying.

Sponsors who are concerned about the liability exposure they bear can look into changing their plans' structures from the Traditional Bundled Plan to a Plan Sponsor-Centric approach. Under a Sponsor-Centric approach, there are two entities, a 3(38) Fiduciary Advisor and a 3(21) Fiduciary, which have the liability exposure, having lifted it from the shoulders of the sponsor. [Specific definitions for those two advisors can be found at *advisor.morningstar.com/articles/article.asp?docId=17902.*] In addition to eliminating liability, another potential benefit is lower costs for both the plan sponsor and participants.

To investigate whether a Plan Sponsor-Centric approach would be right for a sponsor, first identify a 3(21) fiduciary, some of whom have one or more 3(38) Fiduciary Advisors with whom they work. After that, it is highly recommended that any firms contemplating a switch from the Traditional Bundled Approach consult an independent professional (an attorney or 401(k) specialist) before proceeding further.

Donald K. Piermont, Jr., PHR,
has been a member of NJALA since 2008



Hanging with the Aliens at CLI

By Michael Harrison

I quit trying to change the world a few years back. Not that I didn't believe in it anymore or anything. It just seemed like so much work! There was no *changetheworld.org* back then, and I hadn't met the Association of Legal Administrators, of course. It was just little old me and the corner that needed the traffic light; the homeless man that needed a meal every night; the sky that needed to shine a little bluer.

Of course, there was also an endless list of nonprofits—check that, there *is* an endless list of nonprofits—trying to do their part to shoulder the burden. But, I thought, who needed them? I can do this on my own. And, as you know, nothing much got done.

Had I met the Association of Legal Administrators sooner that all might have been different.

I am often amazed at the amount of time and energy people give voluntarily to help in their little corner of the world. And some of them are part of this very organization. They edit this newsletter, find sponsors for the organization's events, arrange the education programs, manage the equipment and employee benefits surveys: They keep this organization running. And they work full-time as administrators in law firms every day!! Who are these people?!! What are they drinking?!!

Well, I don't have an answer for that. Not yet. They may indeed be aliens from planet Volunteer, also known as the planet where people-who-give-tirelessly-of-themselves-for-a-good-cause live. I don't know. But I have a hint now…..CLI. Shhh! I think you are supposed to whisper that. No, it's not quite LSD. But there is something going on there. Chapter Leadership Institute. (Whisper:) These people have help!

I learned about them this past July at the CLI annual meeting in Las Vegas. (Continue whispering:) These people talk to each other. Share ideas. Try to learn better ways to run the ALA chapters. Support each other and commiserate. Imagine? And they're pretty good at it. Take the people in Oregon. Their chapter is spread out all over the place. (And we know they have real aliens out there.) They utilize video conferencing, webinars and other technology tools to host their meetings. Other chapters host education events at different times of the day—breakfast or lunch.

Even *I* picked up a good idea. You know, me—the guy that couldn't get the light installed. I heard someone say (I'm still whispering) in a session on "Building Partnerships with Bar Associations and Other Law Related Organizations" that you should invite the Executive Director of the Bar Association to Managing Partners' night. That was a useful suggestion. So next May, if you go to Managing Partners night and see Angela Scheck, this was where we got the idea from.

Of course, it wasn't all "praise-O-Great-One-and-pass-the-sunflowers" kind of thing. (I said it was CLI, not LSD.) There was a long soul-searching, all-in session addressing the issues associated with the next ALA annual meeting in Hawaii—er, strike that—Honolulu. And there was a pretty good motivational speaker talking all things leadership who probably didn't have his best stuff, wasn't quite as funny (IMHO), or as creative as he wanted to be. He said a lot of things that if you are lucky enough to have had some leadership training and did some leadership reading you probably would have heard before. And that's not a bad thing. But you know, being with the aliens, you kind of wanted to have your jets lit up.

He mentioned things like keeping a positive attitude, remembering the power of incentives, active listening, and mirroring. Here's one you can work on: "Great people make other people feel great." Try making that your morning mantra with your staff and attorneys. Not doing it for ya? Try this then. "Make work fun." I probably should have whispered that one.

This was a well organized, well thought out weekend of training that used small groups effectively to allow for presentations and group discussions that were suitably filled with practical information for improving the running of our chapter. Both of the aliens I went with, our beloved—she really is from planet Volunteer—president Gayle Englert and secretary Robbin Dolan (I'm beginning to think that she's from Volunteer too!), really appreciated the session on the legal issues that are associated with running a non-profit organization. I didn't, of course, because there was a lot of stuff, and I don't have that planet Volunteer cyborg memory thing going on.

We talked about all kinds of you're-getting-me-worried things like bylaws and UBITS (unrelated business income taxes) and

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Hanging with the Aliens at CLI

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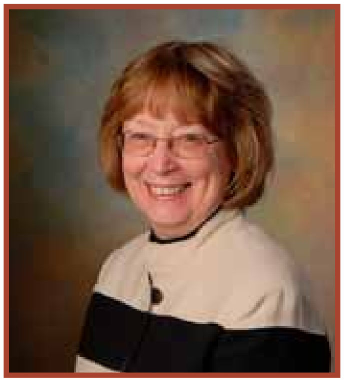
taxable advertising income and antitrust and copyright and salary surveys. Did I say I was a lawyer when I came in?

To memorialize all this, we got a thick book with copies of presentations and handouts and supplemental materials. And get this. (I think I have to whisper again.) We even got to hang out a little. Okay, it wasn't quite the *Marquee*, the hot new night club in the hot new *Cosmopolitan* hotel where the conference was held or anything. Well, to put it bluntly, it wasn't anything like that, I must confess…with some regret. (*Où sont les neiges d'antan?*) But it was cool. And we did all of that good stuff that goes along with having time away from the day job and the routine.

It's enough to get one thinking about things—you know, things like getting things done. And the people who do them. And the things that need to be done. And the volunteers! Like the people who are running the Community Challenge this fall. It's not quite changing the world, I know. It's far from it, frankly. But it is people like these that are making me think that some little bit of that might be possible after all….

Michael Harrison is the Executive Director of Lindabury, McCormick, Estabrook & Cooper, P.C.

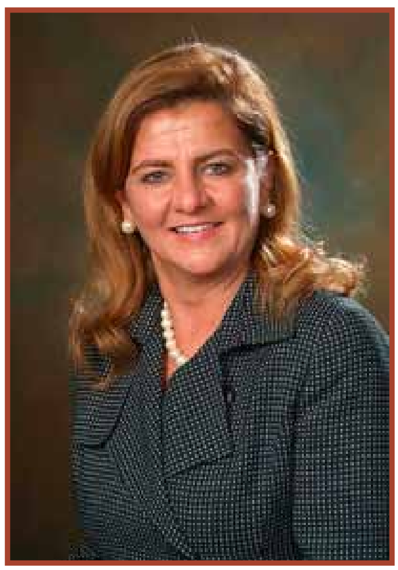


Meet Your Chapter President

By Fran Puntillo, CLM

Gayle Englert, currently a resident of Sea Bright, New Jersey, was born in Newark and spent most of her formative years in West Orange. She is the baby of her family, arriving at the Englert home eleven years after her three older brothers were born. In keeping with a family tradition of picking names that began with the letter "G," her mom, Lorraine, chose the name Gayle for her baby. The name wasn't spelled traditionally because Mrs. E was so delighted (gay) to have given birth to a daughter; she wanted the baby's name to reflect her joy.

The feeling was mutual: Gayle identified her mom as one of the heroes in her life. Gayle's mom was an inspiration to Gayle. Lorraine Englert always encouraged her daughter to strive for success and to excel at her endeavors. Gayle said she grew up in a "normal" household, playing with Barbie dolls and (believe it or not) collecting Matchbox cars and trucks. She loved to design clothes, which her mom would translate/sew into outfits for Gayle. Gayle enjoyed singing and acting and did both in high school. She played Gypsy Rose Lee, the American burlesque entertainer, in a high school performance. Is this the same Gayle Englert who went to Syracuse University and earned a bachelor's degree in political science?? The same one who earned a master's degree in public administration from Fairleigh Dickinson??? This is a lady with many surprises and talents.



2011-12 NJALA president, Gayle Englert

During the summers of her college years, Gayle worked at Rickels, a home improvement store. Knowing Gayle's penchant for organization and structure, I'll bet the stockroom and aisles in Rickels never looked better. She also worked at McDonalds (Gayle is very proud of the fact that she never got burned during her two and a half years of employment there—that has to be a record!).

Gayle was employed as an administrative clerk at Sills Cummis while finishing up her grad school courses. Gayle initially thought she'd like to pursue a career in local politics after receiving her degree, but instead she accepted an attractive employment offer from the firm of Hannoch Weisman as their HR Director. When the Hannoch firm dissolved several years later, Gayle joined Cole Schotz Meisel Forman & Leonard, a firm with 120 attorneys and 5 offices, as their Director of Human Resources. And as Gayle's mom was known to say, "Everything happens for a reason!" Gayle's fate was sealed. She found her "niche" working in law firms.

Gayle enjoys her current position at Cole Schotz, where she specializes in human resources and recruiting. She thrives on the diverse responsibilities of her position, including overseeing seasoned legal secretaries and shepherding legal newbies through the firm's Summer Associates Program. Cole Schotz also gave Gayle an opportunity to continue her singing "career" by encouraging her to join the firm's rock bank, CoSho. And she hasn't given up acting either: Last year she won first prize at the costume/talent contest at Region 1's Conference in Long Branch, NJ. And let me tell you, Snooki never looked so good!

Gayle's professional bio should include the fact that she is a member of SHRM and has served as president of SHRM's Morris County chapter. She was chair of the Garden State SHRM Conference Committee. She is a member of NALP (National Association of Legal Career Professionals), sat on their board of directors, and served as their vice president.

Gayle joined ALA and NJALA in 2000. Initially, she was unsure if membership in NJALA would be beneficial, because she thought ALA and NJALA might not be directly relevant to her position. Ha! We quickly converted her, and she now thinks of the networking portion of NJALA's monthly meetings as her personal therapy sessions. NJALA quickly tapped into Gayle's prior experience with SHRM and NALP and asked her to serve on NJALA's board of trustees. She rose through the officer ranks to become the chapter

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Meet Your Chapter President

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president for the 2011-2012 year. Overall, Gayle feels that the return on her investment in NJALA has far exceeded her expectations.

When this busy lady has personal time off away from the office, she loves to travel. Gayle has been to exotic places like Iceland, Greenland, and Russia, as well as Monument Valley in Utah, which was one of her most memorable family trips with her parents. She continues to incorporate her love of family, the beach, and vacations. She has taken family members to Hershey Park for Christmas. She has taken her nieces to Bermuda for their 16th and 21st birthdays; and on their 25th and 30th birthdays, the ladies continued their tradition and visited the Bahamas and Disney. Did you know that Gayle is Godmother to two nieces and one nephew? I'm sure those three are hoping their Godmother will continue the tradition of celebrating major events on the road.

When asked about memorable moments in her past, Gayle reported that she is a Universal Life Minister and officiated at her niece's wedding not too long ago. She has also authored a book entitled *Leading the Legal Recruitment Team: A Recruitment Administrator's Handbook*.

Gayle admitted to me that she enjoys wine, Pinot Grigio in particular. While sharing some wine during this interview, I asked Gayle to tell me which famous people she'd like to meet. She immediately responded she'd love to meet Cher and Bill Clinton. A little baffled by her selections, I asked her to explain her choices. We talked about Cher's career, which includes acting, singing, comedy, etc. So, okay, I "get" Cher. But Bill? Really, Gayle???

I asked Gayle to describe her pet peeves. She said as a Libra, she loves organization and harmony, so she hates things that are askew. She also can't understand how people can be intentionally cruel.

I asked her to describe the professional challenges she expects to face in the future. Just as smartphones have become commonplace, Gayle foresees hoteling and virtual offices becoming the norm, rather than the exception, in the future. She feels that keeping a good balance between the needs of the staff and the good of the firm, combined with the isolation factor that the virtual office imposes, is what legal administrators will be dealing with in the near future.

But I'm not worried. With people like this year's NJALA president to lead us through the tough times, we'll all make out just fine!

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

Answers to the Cultural Challenge, from page 20.

1. Dionysius (Greek) or Bacchus in Roman mythology.

2. True.

3. A 65' high statue guarding the Pyramids at Giza.

4. Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina and parts of Kentucky and Missouri.

5. Seafaring warriors from Scandinavia.

6. (1896.) It upheld the constitutionality of state laws requiring racial segregation in private businesses (particularly railroads) under the doctrine of "separate but equal."

7. *Twelfth Night,* by William Shakespeare.

8. Hobson was a liveryman who forced his customers to take whichever horse stood nearest the door. Thus, a Hobson's choice is no choice at all.

9. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*.

10. It measures the distance light travels in one year.

11. Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

12. Horses and donkeys can interbreed producing mules (male donkey/female horse) and hinnies (female donkey/male horse). The world is a mysterious place.

Presenting… Our Business Partners

By Rose English and Nancy Fosina

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(Continued on page 40)

Presenting Our Business Sponsors
(Continued from page 39)

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Richard Schulman
631-422-5267
rschulman@lanassociates.com

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Rose English is the Human Resources Manager of Morgan Melhuish Abrutyn in Livingston

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NJALA is grateful for the continuing support of its sponsors, and recognizes that their sponsorship and assistance make possible many of the educational programs and opportunities offered to our members. Please visit *www.njala.net* for full sponsorship information.

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Hatches, Matches & Dispatches

By Tom J. Kaminski

It's autumn once again. It has been an eventful summer with earthquakes, hurricanes, rain, and floods. It should be an interesting winter coming our way. The good news is your friends and colleagues had a lot to share over the past few months as well.

Robbin Dolan (Laddey, Clark & Ryan) shares a great idea that her firm has for Halloween. The firm donates $5.00 to a local charity for every employee who wears a costume on October 31. The costumes this year must represent something from the year they were born—could be an event, a person, etc. They also have a "guess the number" of candy corn in a jar. Rumor has it, Robbin was wearing a Hula outfit to the office this year.

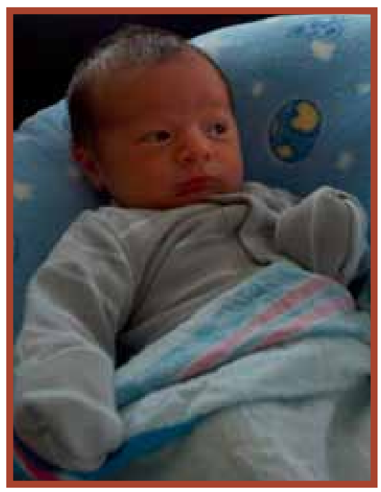
Joanne A. O'Beirne (Wolkstein, Von Ellen & Brown) headed down to the Dominican Republic for some fun in the sun Oct. 22-29th!! It was her first vacation since taking the new job that she has been in for 10 months. Luckily, she is back in time for Halloween as her new neighborhood is full of kids and adults who love Halloween!!

Congratulations to **Mariann Stamm (Farer Fersko)**, who graduated from Montclair State University with B.S. in Business Administration (magna cum laude) back in January.

Congratulations to **Cindy Landis (Gennett Kallman)** whose daughter, Carol, married John Beck on Saturday, September 17, 2011, at Sacred Heart in Rockaway. A reception followed at Lake Mohawk Country Club in Sparta. In May of 2011, John started a new job at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland. Carol returned home for a few months, and was happy to follow him down to Maryland after their honeymoon at the Outer Banks in North Carolina.

Ronald Henry (Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer) and his wife, Donna, checked another one off their bucket list. In October, they headed off to Tanzania and Kenya for a two-week safari.

Barbara Isabella (Margulies Wind) and her husband took an amazing trip to China last July. It was a combination land tour and river boat cruise down the Yangtze River. They started out in Beijing and ended in Shanghai. Barbara reports that it was absolutely fascinating. While there, they visited, among other things, Tiananmen Square**,** the Forbidden City, the Great Wall of China, the Terracotta Warriors, a Hutong, a children's classroom, the Great Gorges and the Great Gorges Dam. It was a trip they will never forget!



Congratulations to **Linda Gerber (Einhorn Harris)** who welcomed her second grandson, Oliver Steven Porro, on August 24, 2011. Oliver joins his proud parents, Karen and Steven Porro, and big brother Gavin!

Barbara Maglin (Simeone Law Group) is on the run!!! That is, she ran a 5K race called "Tunnel to Towers" in Brooklyn, NY, on September 25, 2011, with her 20-year old son who is a volunteer firefighter in Sparta, NJ. The Tunnel to Towers organization raises money for the families of firefighters, police, etc., who were affected by the tragedy of 9/11. Barbara will also be traveling to Disney in November to celebrate her younger son's 5th birthday.

Well folks, that concludes another edition of Hatches Matches & Dispatches. Remember: Life is a ticket to the greatest show on EARTH... make sure you get *your* ticket before they're all SOLD OUT!!!

Until next time, strive to be your best!

Tom J. Kaminski has been a member of NJALA since 2008

Q&A: TODAY

By Anita Setaro

Q: *Describe something unique about your firm's culture.*

Barbara Hughes of Littler Mendelsohn. Although we have office in 48 states there is a very collaborative work ethic.

Karen Steinberger of Saiber. That's easy for me! Saiber is unique in many, many ways. It is truly a great place to work (I know everyone says that!). Everyone is treated like family—really—because they really care about the people here. As an attestation to that, we have had TWO secretaries leave and return to the fold in the past few months, and an associate left awhile back and is now back with us. There's a reason for that—we treat people like people and we have a good time working together.

Rosemary Jerome of Lasser Hochman. Of our 17 clerical employees, one was hired in 1977; seven were hired in the early to mid 1980's; two of those employees were back from time off for child rearing and were originally hired in the 1970's; six were hired in the mid 1990's; and the remainder in the early to mid 2000's. All are with us today, including myself who has been with the firm for over 50 years.

Cynthia Landis of Gennnet Kallman Antin & Robinson. Every Friday afternoon we all gather in the kitchen at 3:00 for coffee and dessert. The treat is brought in by the employee who signed up for that particular day. It is a way for all of us to get together—sometimes leading to discussions on particular cases.

Angela Segal of Latham & Watkins LLP. Latham & Watkins works under the "one firm concept" with no individual practice office profit centers. Supporting this philosophy, we don't have a home/corporate office, either. We do have a fairly large group called "GSO" personnel (Global Service Organization), but they don't reside in any one location. So you can be part of the global staff supporting all the offices for a particular function and work out of any one of the 32 offices. Example, Global HR staff members are located in either DC or NY. Global Accounting is located in LA. Global Operations staff is located in San Diego, LA and Chicago.

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

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OR IF YOU WANT TO BE PART

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OR BOARD MEMBER (See Page 3).

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