



DC NLG April 2009 Newsletter

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1. President's Greeting

Welcome to the first monthly issue of the DC-NLG Chapter Newsletter. In this issue and coming issues, we can look to the newsletter to learn the scheduled times for monthly activities such as Board meetings or our next private practitioner's luncheon, discover what activities the Guild has been participating in, what we have planned, and the important and interesting work our members are involved in. I want to also introduce Rachael Moshman, the Chapter's part-time organizer and office manager, who will conduct member outreach, including communicating and coordinating DC Guild activities with DC law school chapters of the NLG; maintain the membership list; and serve as a liaison with the National Office. Members are invited to submit relevant articles and event notices of interest and relevant to the DC Guild.

Contributing Writer: Turna Lewis, DC-NLG President

2. Ed Elder on the Road to Recovery

Ed Elder, current DC NLG Board Member and former Mid-Atlantic Regional Vice President for the NLG, was badly injured while walking his dog in a hit and run accident in early April. Currently, we can all welcome the news that Ed's recovery continues to progress each day. Though he expects to stay in National Rehabilitation Hospital for the next six to eight weeks, and additional recovery time will be required once he is back home, his wife Sara and other visitors report that he is alert and enjoys brief visits from friends. Please check the Facebook page "Friends of Ed Elder" for updates on Ed's status and more information about visiting him.

3. Event: Private Practitioner's Brown Bag Lunch

May 20, 2009, 12:15

Hosted by Cora Tekach, Tekach Law Firm, 1666 Connecticut Ave., NW, 5th Floor

The Private Practitioner's Brown Bag Lunch meets monthly and provides an opportunity for NLG members who are private practitioners to meet and share ideas about private practice. These meetings are a great resource for those lawyers who are just starting out, and an opportunity for more experienced members to share their knowledge. Cora provides beverages for our lunches. All members are welcome. Call Jim Drew for more info, 202-331-1639

4. Event: Board Meeting

The next DC – NLG Board Meeting will take place Tuesday, May 12, 2009 at 6:30 pm at the law office of Jim Drew, 2000 P Street, 4th Floor. All members are welcome

5. Reportback on the Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference was held in Baltimore on Saturday, March 28th at the University of Maryland Law School. Incoming National President David Gespass was present, and joined Mid-Atlantic members from DC, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. DC members in attendance included James Drew, Renee L. Bowser, Ed Elder, Ann Wilcox, Dave Saldana, Katy Clemens, Rachael Moshman, and Turna Lewis. David noted that the October 2009 National Convention will be in Seattle, WA, the 10th anniversary of the Seattle WTO actions. He also urged NLG members to "dig deep" for financial support, encouraging everyone to make a small sustaining contribution to the national office (e.g. as low as \$10/month).

Each of the three represented chapters gave a summary of the activities their chapter is involved with. Philadelphia's dedicated efforts to rebuild their chapter have clearly born fruit. They are involved with an immigration clinic and an employment clinic, as well as offering a series of talks for law students, seeking certification as a CLE provider, and developing a project to register inmates to vote. Baltimore spoke of their celebration for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' 60th anniversary, held in 2008. DC members mentioned the hiring of a new organizer to help the branch grow and run more smoothly, our mentor program, our private practitioner's luncheon, the Litigation Fund, and our ongoing demonstration support.

The conference's panels took up the majority of the day, and were well worth the drive to Baltimore. In a panel on the right to counsel as a fundamental right, Wilhem Joseph, Executive Director of Maryland Legal Aid Bureau, discussed how difficult it is to afford legal services in civil matters, such as family, economic and social services, when one has a family or work for minimum wage. Another panelist noted that many states do not provide counsel to indigent defendants in preliminary proceedings such as bail hearings - when basic liberty rights are at stake, but where proceedings are not covered by federal Constitutional guarantees of the right to counsel.

Baltimore youth from youth advocacy groups joined us in an innovative panel on empowering the voices of youth. Panelists, including youth who had come up through the foster system, let us know how important it was to have a lawyer or social worker who was honest and straightforward with them, and who listened to what they had to say. The final panel focused on the Employee Free Choice Act. Panelists continued to be optimistic about EFCA's chances of passing, and focused on how EFCA would transfer power from corporate control to the workers and improve their ability to use the union to their benefit. Panelists also noted that healthy

collective bargaining among union workers helps ensure that "middle class" or salaried workers also receive a living wage and benefits. (This panel was of particular interest to several labor lawyers in our group!)

Contributing Writer: Ann Wilcox

6. Reviving a Popular Practice: The NLG Happy Hour

On Thursday, March 26 our DC NLG chapter hosted a happy hour for NLG students and chapter members at Las Canteras in Adams Morgan. About 15-20 people chatted about legal news and upcoming NLG events while enjoying Peruvian drinks, Pisco Punch and Marakuya Sour, and eating delicious quinoa fritters and yuca cakes.

For our next Happy Hour we'll be commencing May Day festivities.

Please join us on April 30th, 6pm - ??, at the Beacon Bar and Grill, 1615 Rhode Island Ave., NW (1 block North of 17th and M Sts., across from the YMCA).

Contributing Writer: Megins Skolnik

7. Announcements

Legal observers needed for upcoming demonstrations that may involve risk of arrest. No previous legal observing experience required. Please contact Ann Wilcox at Wilcox_Ann@yahoo.com.

Email rmoshman@hotmail.com with announcements and articles for next month's newsletter. Deadline for submissions May 20. The newsletter is also looking for suggestions and ideas for future issues, as well as interested volunteers.