

April 2008

INTER ALIA

Latin for “Among Other Things,” this monthly section gives young attorneys information or advice about life situations that are unique to our readership.



THE GREEN REVOLUTION WILL NOT BE TELEVISIED

By Cara Patton
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This article is part one of a three-part series focusing on “green” practices that young attorneys can implement to lessen their impact on the environment.

Earth Day has come and gone, and you probably knew of many events in observance of the day. Hopefully you participated in some way on April 22 – whether it was by generating a little less garbage, helping to clean our beaches, or even reading up on current environmental issues. But now that Earth Day is over and the marketing is no longer present, will you continue to participate in the environmental movement? Why is it that the saying “Earth Day is every day” is a cliché and not a maxim?

I believe that this is because the real green revolution is going on unnoticed. A significant portion of the press and discussion surrounding environmentalism misses the point. We cannot save the earth by changing our ways for one day each year. Environmentalism is a habit, not a fad, and it is one that should be practiced long after April 22 has passed. If we – as attorneys, as responsible citizens, as people living on a coastline that may disappear – are serious about our duty to promote environmentalism, then we must act as environmentalists every day.

If you agree that we have a responsibility (or at least a reason) to lessen our impact on the earth, the next question is “How?” You can start by taking a step back and looking at the overall effect of your actions. Here is where I believe the Earth Day advertising is off base: it’s not about whether you should buy “organic” versus “all natural” shampoo, and it’s not about paper or plastic at the grocery store. Decisions like these are just the start. If you truly want to help the environment, then you need to take a step back, look at the bigger picture, and act accordingly. The way to lessen your impact is by stopping to think before you act and making effective environmental choices. Beyond that, it’s about practical environmentalism – that is, making choices that are simple and easy enough that you will make them again and again.

In my experience, you don’t need to know much about the science or policy surrounding environmentalism to be an effective environmentalist. Simply following the mantra of “reduce, reuse, recycle,” can go a very long way towards “going green.” But back to the idea of missing the point: the first two words are regularly left out of the discourse on environmentalism. This phrase is actually a hierarchy of effectiveness: first reduce how much you consume. If you can’t do that, then reuse what you have. Finally, if you can no longer reuse something, then recycle it.

Here’s an example: There is a 55 percent savings of water by producing recycled paper instead of virgin paper. However, there is a 100 percent savings of water by not using so much paper. By cutting back on the amount of goods you use, your actions are that much more effective. I encourage you to think about whether your actions make sense, and this will serve as a valuable guidepost for acting as an environmentalist. The “feel good” environmentalism that gets a lot of press around April 22 is a start, and it’s absolutely necessary to start somewhere, but there is so much more that should be done. The “real” green revolution (i.e., making smart and effective decisions) may not be glamorous, but it is going on every day of the year.

As attorneys, we are strongly encouraged to act as role models and give back to the community. The sheer number of San Diego attorneys who volunteer their time, and the amount of time that many attorneys give, is both significant and impressive. In addition to “giving back,” consider another philosophy: “take less.” Take fewer paper cups from the

LAW WEEK 2008 – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

April 26 – May 4, 2008

Volunteer for Law Week 2008, “The Rule of Law – Foundation for Opportunity and Fairness.” Law Week programming includes several opportunities for the public to speak with volunteer lawyers free of charge, as well as a variety of events and programs geared toward educating students and celebrating San Diego’s legal community.

In order for these programs to be effective, we need your assistance! To volunteer for Law Week 2008 please [click here](#).

COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

VIP Mentors

VIP is an organization that recruits, matches and assists attorneys in mentoring parolees when they return to the community.

For more information about serving as a mentor, please visit www.vipmentors.org call (619) 220-5348 or e-mail vip-sd@vipmentors.org.

The San Diego County Bar Association is seeking volunteers to work at its water station at this year’s Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon.

The race will take place on **Sunday, June 1**, and will serve as a fundraiser for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

For more information or to sign up, [click here](#).

Upcoming Events

April 30, 2008

YNLD General Meeting and announcements at the San Diego County Bar Center at noon.

Come meet the Board of Directors, hear about what is

coffee shop and bring your travel mug, take fewer trips in your car and walk to your destination, or take less time consuming things and spend some time volunteering with environmental initiatives. What better way to promote our community than by making it more livable?

I urge you to stop and think before you make decisions. There are dozens of ways in which you can (almost) painlessly modify your lifestyle in order to decrease your impact. If you're at a loss for where to start, read the next two articles in this series, which will appear in the May and June YNLD publications. The articles will provide a list of basic changes that have a real impact on your ecological footprint. In the meantime, ask yourself: are you that person who uses recycled-paper checks to pay for gas in an automobile that gets 10 miles to the gallon? If so, the revolution is passing you by.

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happening with the division and share your ideas.

May 28, 2008

Civil Litigation 101 –Survival Skills for Litigating in State Court: What Every New Attorney Must Know.

Lecture #3 – Preparing your Civil Case, Part 1: Gathering Evidence through Written Discovery at the San Diego County Bar Center at noon. Registration information to follow.

June 5, 2008

Save the date for the YNLD/La Raza Networking Event. More details to follow.

June 19, 2008

Save the date for the Lawyers Club/SDCBA/YNLD Symposium on *Work/Life Balance: Bridging the Generational Gap and Creating a Bridge to Greater Equity and Flexibility* at Bristol Hotel from 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. More details to follow.