

FJD Works to Cut Carbon Footprint, Costs

By Jenimae Almquist

WHILE BUDGET CONSTRAINTS ENCOURAGE the Philadelphia courts to reduce, reuse and recycle as much as possible, there are a number of exciting sustainability initiatives afoot in Pennsylvania's First Judicial District. Led by Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas President Judge Pamela Pryor Dembe and Court Administrator David Wasson, the FJD is reducing its carbon footprint, one program at a time, with significant savings to both taxpayers and landfills. Law firms and legal departments can follow the FJD's lead, as these programs improve morale within law firms, capitalize on employee creativity and improve the bottom line.

Given rapid improvements in technology, experts recommend replacing computers every three years. A computer in the court system, however, has an average lifespan of eight to nine years, making it less attractive as a donation item. Rather than send the old equipment to a dumpster, the Department of Information & Technology sought out a company that is certified to dispose of technology in a green way. Repurposing and recycling computers and other large machinery prevent chemical leaching into ground and water, and saves landfill space.

Wasson also incentivizes creativity, including cash bonuses to employees who develop innovations to conserve energy or paper. Wasson quipped about "Dave Dollars," wherein individuals who demonstrate process improvement will be allowed additional budget dollars for activities like staff appreciation days.

Several other programs promote fuel and energy savings as well. City workers, including court personnel, can offset commuting costs through Wage Works, a pre-tax commuter benefit program that reduces emissions and the city's payroll tax outlay, and even provides biking incentives. Before employees leave for the evening commute, current court protocol requires that all machines be powered down, with the exception of a weekly virus update. The city actually monitors energy usage, so the tracking system encourages compliance.

Fuel costs are also spared by increasing reliance upon videoconferencing by some courts. Not only can lawyers avoid travel time and parking costs, but reductions in prisoner transport also render the court system more efficient and more earth friendly. In criminal court, some hear-

ings are conducted by video and some procedures involve taking testimony by video means. On the civil side, litigators should be pleased to hear that Wasson has pledged to investigate the ability to hold case management conferences by telephone or video means.

Further, in City Hall, a monstrous building that is difficult to heat and cool, the city recently installed new, energy-efficient air conditioners and substituted

continued on page 21

Philadelphia Bar Association Sustainability Pledge

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FIRST signers of the Philadelphia Bar's Green Ribbon Sustainability Pledge:

- Berner Klaw & Watson LLP
- Cozen O'Connor
- Fox Rothschild LLP
- Klehr Harrison Harvey Branzburg LLP
- Langsam Stevens & Silver LLP;
- Lopez McHugh LLP

- Manko, Gold, Katcher & Fox, LLP
- Montgomery, McCracken, Walker & Rhoads LLP
- Reed Smith LLP

To sign onto the pledge (or be grandfathered in if you are already participating in another effort), please visit the Green Ribbon Committee web page at <http://www.philadelphia-bar.org/page/green>.



August CLE Calendar

These CLE programs will be held at The CLE Conference Center, Wanamaker Building, 10th Floor, Suite 1010, Juniper Street entrance unless otherwise noted.

Live & Simulcast Seminars

- Aug. 2 • A Day on Real Estate - East
- Human Rights in Crisis: Combatting Human Trafficking
- Aug. 4 • Making Your Case with a Better Memory
- Aug. 5 • Social Media in the Workplace: Facebook, Twitter, foursquare & Other Web 2.0 Sites
- Aug. 9 • Pennsylvania Taxes - Update and Selected Topics
- Aug. 10 • Gain the Edge! Negotiation Strategies for Lawyers and Business Professionals
- The Nine Principles of Litigation
- Aug. 11 • Trial of a Low Impact Auto Case
- The Lifelong Impact of a Criminal Record
- Aug. 15 • Death and Taxes
- Aug. 16 • Contempt Hearings in Patent Litigation
- Real Estate Issues in Estates
- Aug. 17 • Thurgood Marshall is Coming!
- Aug. 18 • Anatomy of a "Superstar" Deposition
- Practicing Law Effectively and Having a Life Too
- Aug. 19 • Contracts of the Rich and Famous
- Aug. 23 • Lincoln on Professionalism
- Internet Legal Research
- Aug. 24 • Guaranty and Suretyship
- Using Trusts and Insurance for Asset Protection
- Aug. 25 • 8th Annual Animal Law Conference
- Aug. 26 • Anatomy for Lawyers: Mastering Medical Records
- Practice Before the Department of Veteran's Affairs
- Aug. 29 • Negotiation: Reaching Agreement on Your Terms
- Aug. 30 • Primer on Mechanics' Liens and Bond Claims
- Aug. 31 • e-Discovery in Employment Litigation
- Ethics Potpourri:
 - Bob Dylan and the Art of Taking Legal Ethics Seriously
 - PBA Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee Update
 - Lawyer Marketing & Advertising Ethics Reviews
 - Social Media for Lawyers: Darned if You Do, Darned if You Don't?
 - How to be a Lawyer 102
 - Law Firm Responsibilities and Recovery

Video Seminars

- Aug. 3 • Motorcycle Law
- Aug. 4 • Ethics Potpourri: Bob Dylan and the Art of Taking Legal Ethics Seriously
- Aug. 5 • Ethics Potpourri: Law Firm Responsibilities and Recovery
- Aug. 8 • Family Law Institute 2011
- Aug. 12 • The Revised Model Stock Purchase Agreement
- Aug. 15 • Ethics Potpourri: Social Media for Lawyers: Darned If You Do, Darned If You Don't?
- Aug. 17 • Ethics Potpourri: Bob Dylan and the Art of Taking Legal Ethics Seriously
- Aug. 22 • Ethics Potpourri: Law Firm Responsibilities and Recovery
- Aug. 23 • Workers' Compensation Issues Affecting Your Auto Accident Case
- Aug. 24 • Ethics Potpourri: Social Media for Lawyers: Darned If You Do, Darned If You Don't?
- Aug. 30 • Ethics Potpourri: Bob Dylan and the Art of Taking Legal Ethics Seriously
- Aug. 31 • Trial Evidence: Artistry & Advocacy in the Courtroom

Distance Education – Live Webcasts

If you can't watch it live, sign up now and get credit when you watch it later (you've got 3 months after the webcast date).

- Aug. 5 Social Media in the Workplace
- Aug. 9 Pennsylvania Taxes – Update and Selected Topics
- Aug. 11 The Lifelong Impact of a Criminal Record
- Aug. 17 Guaranty and Suretyship
- Aug. 19 Contracts of the Rich and Famous
- Aug. 23 Internet Legal Research
- Aug. 24 Real Estate Issues in Estates
- Aug. 26 Practice Before the Department of Veteran's Affairs
- Aug. 30 Using Trusts and Insurance for Asset Protection
- Primer on Mechanics' Liens and Bond Claims
- Aug. 31 e-Discovery in Employment Litigation

► www.pbi.org ► 800-932-4637



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Note: While the following listings have been verified prior to press time, any scheduled event may be subject to change by the committee or section chairs. Lunches are \$8 for members and \$9.50 for nonmembers, unless otherwise indicated.

Monday, Aug. 1

Family Law Section: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th floor Board Room. Lunch: \$8.
Civil Rights Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th floor Conference Center. Lunch: \$8.

Tuesday, Aug. 2

Section Chairs: meeting, 8:30 a.m., 10th floor Board Room.

Wednesday, Aug. 3

Delivery of Legal Services Committee: meeting, 8:30 a.m., 10th floor Board Room.

Rules and Procedure Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th floor Board Room. Lunch: \$8.

Thursday, Aug. 4

Government and Public Service Lawyers Committee: meeting, 12:30 p.m., 11th

floor Committee Room South. Lunch: \$8.

Friday, Aug. 5

LGBT Rights Committee: meeting, 8:30 a.m., 10th floor Board Room.

Monday, Aug. 8

Business Law Section Executive Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th floor Committee Room South.

Tuesday, Aug. 9

Real Property Section Executive Committee: meeting, 11:30 a.m.,

Criminal Justice Section Executive Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th floor Board Room.

Solo and Small Firm Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th floor Conference Center. Lunch: \$8.

Wednesday, Aug. 10

Civil Gideon Housing Subcommittee: meeting, 9 a.m., 10th floor Board Room.

Thursday, Aug. 11

Legislative Liaison Committee: meeting, 12:30 p.m., 10th floor Board Room. Lunch: \$8.

Friday, Aug. 12

The Philadelphia Lawyer magazine Editorial Board: meeting, 12:30 p.m., 11th floor Committee Room South.

Monday, Aug. 15

Public Interest Section Executive Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th floor Board Room.

Tuesday, Aug. 16

Cabinet: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th floor Board Room.

Wednesday, Aug. 17

Immigration Law Committee: meeting, 8:30 a.m., 10th floor Board Room.

Thursday, Aug. 18

Family Law Section Executive Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th floor Committee Room South.

Law Practice Management Committee:

meeting, 12 p.m., 10th floor Board Room. Lunch: \$8.
Health Care Law Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th floor Conference Center. Lunch: \$8.50.

Friday, Aug. 19

Social Security Disability Benefits Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th floor Conference Center. Lunch: \$8.

Monday, Aug. 22

Young Lawyers Division Executive Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th floor Board Room.

Wednesday, Aug. 24

Medical Legal Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th floor Conference Center. Lunch: \$8.

Thursday, Aug. 25

Board of Governors: meeting, 4 p.m., 10th floor Board Room.

Tuesday, Aug. 30

Criminal Justice Section: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th floor Conference Center. Lunch: \$8.

Women in the Profession Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th floor Board Room. Lunch: \$8.

Register online for most events at philadelphiabar.org. Unless otherwise specified, all checks for luncheons and programs should be made payable to the Philadelphia Bar Association and mailed to Bar Headquarters, 1101 Market St., 11th fl., Philadelphia, PA 19107-2955. Send Bar Association-related calendar items 30 days in advance to Managing Editor, Philadelphia Bar Reporter, Philadelphia Bar Association, 1101 Market St., Philadelphia, PA 19107-2955. Fax: (215) 238-1159. E-mail: reporter@philabar.org.

Green

continued from page 5

new windows to prevent energy leakage. Likewise, light bulbs recently were updated in every office in City Hall, although courtrooms have not yet upgraded to energy-efficient lighting.

Electronic document systems also diminish energy costs insofar as printing is reduced. Court employees currently have a printer at every desk, which requires a great deal of energy when printing. Wasson challenges employees to walk to a centrally located printer, which forces second thoughts about using excess paper.

Judge Dembe also continues to encourage court employees to read and store documents electronically in lieu of printing. When asked how attorneys can help the courts in this regard, Judge Dembe urged lawyers to “help reduce energy and paper usage (and incidentally save the sanity of judges and law clerks) by not sending hand-delivered and faxed and snail mail copies of things we are getting electronically from Civil Administration.” Similarly, attorneys can read critical documents online where available instead of printing them, or consider using double-sided printing and copying.

Online document management will

diminish the energy required for printing. For instance, Stanley Thompson, director of the Complex Litigation Center – which has a docket of approximately 8,000 cases – is striving to keep trial lists in real time so that attorneys need not call, or receive written reminders. The entire court system is moving away from printed notices for any type of court business.

Soon, the court will be able to say “there is an app for that” when referring to viewing court documents. “We are a business as well, so we are applying the same efforts and technology into making our own internal processes paperless,” Wasson said. This involves a more accessible website, which Wasson plans to expand to feature all the different types of readers in the public domain, including smartphones and iPads. In fact, much like the federal PACER system, the courts in Philadelphia hope to “open up documents to non-parties, at least in the civil division,” said Wasson. This would eliminate the fuel cost and the hassle of



WebCheck

For more information or to sign on to the Sustainability Pledge, visit philadelphiabar.org/page/green.

Use your QR code reader to link directly to this resource.



traveling to the court to search for documents in exchange for a “reasonable, small fee,” he added.

The courts have also recognized that paper savings has incidental benefits besides the up-front savings of trees and energy costs. For example, toner usage has been reduced by almost half during Judge Dembe’s tenure. Courts have transitioned to recycled or

reusable toner as well. More importantly, the court’s insistence upon e-filing has forced firms to rethink their document management, printing and paper usage. As the FJD works to bring the remaining 50 percent of its courts fully into electronic filing over the next two years, the benefits to the earth, the community and local attorneys can only increase.

Jenimae Almqvist (jmalmqvist@lopez-mchugh.com), an associate with Lopez McHugh, LLP, is a member of the Green Ribbon Committee, a subcommittee of the Law Practice Management Committee of the Philadelphia Bar Association.

VIP Moves to New Office at 1500 Walnut Street

PHILADELPHIA VIP, THE HUB OF PRO bono legal services for low-income clients in Philadelphia, is pleased to announce that as of July 15 the office has moved to 1500 Walnut Street, Suite 400.

“In order to serve more clients with critical legal needs, our organization continues to grow. Because of that growth we are excited to move into a larger office space,” said Executive Director Sara Woods. “We are thankful for all of the support we have received from our friends, volunteers, and donors for helping make this move possible. We welcome them to our new space.”

VIP promotes equal justice for the poor by providing civil legal services not otherwise available, collaborating with other legal services organizations and promoting a culture of volunteerism by educating and exposing attorneys and law students to issues of poverty. The new office facilities will help VIP to better meet the needs of our clients and our community.

VIP’s telephone (215-523-9550) and fax (215-564-0845) numbers remain the same. For more information on Philadelphia VIP, visit www.phillyvip.org or email phillyvip@phillyvip.org.