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FOR THE RECORD

YOUNG/NEW LAWYERS DIVISION

March 2009

ON THE STAND

Marcel Proust was a French intellectual and writer who is famous for what is now known as the Proust questionnaire, a popular party game during his time. In "On the Stand," area attorneys are put on the spot about their lives, thoughts, values and experiences, and the responses are printed, largely unedited.



SUE METER, ESQ.

By Christina Sosa
California Western School of Law, 1L

When Susan Meter first got involved in the Young/New Lawyers Division of the San Diego County Bar Association, she knew she wanted to be active in community service. Meter grew up in a single-parent home. "We struggled for a few years after my parents divorced, and we had a lot of people who helped us get by. I feel it's my duty now to give back," Meter said. Meter served as Chair for the Public Service Committee from 2005 to 2008 and implemented several new projects for the organization. During Meter's tenure as chair, the YNLD got involved in the FaceLift project, Taste of the Nation, and the Free Law program, now known as the Ask-a-Lawyer program. Meter has a Bachelor's degree in Spanish from the University of Pittsburgh. She put herself through law school at California Western School of Law by working as a clerk at Butterfield Schechter LLP, where she is currently an attorney.

What do you appreciate most in your friends?

I appreciate loyalty and honesty. I tend to be a very direct person, and I appreciate when people are very direct back to me. Don't sugar-coat anything. I'd like to just be told how it is and what you think and what your opinion is directly.

What do you admire most in people generally?

I admire hard-working people. I especially admire people who have come from tough backgrounds, who fought hard to get to where they are.

What talent, which you don't currently have, do you wish you possessed?

I wish I could play the guitar. I recently purchased an electric guitar, and I'm going to take lessons.

What career did you want to have when you were five years old?

I wanted to be a veterinarian. I loved animals, and I wanted to work with animals. I thought that was the best way you could work with animals.

What is your idea of a happy moment?

Sitting on the beach, in Maui, with my husband, watching the sun go down, drinking a lava flow, no cell phones, no fax machines, no e-mail, just the two of us with nothing around.

If you could trade places with anyone, who would you trade with?

I would probably trade places with my husband. He's a professor at USD. I don't think that I could endure the many years of schooling he went through to get there, but he has a really good job, and he teaches something that I have a passion for – Spanish. He gets to teach eight months out of the year and have four months off and gets sabbaticals. I just have a lot of respect for him, his position, and what he does.

Who was the teacher that had the greatest effect on you and why?

The teacher that had the greatest effect on me would be Professor Ehrlich at Cal Western School of Law. I had him for Property, Bankruptcy, and he was also an independent instructor for the scholarly writing paper. He really taught me how to be disciplined. He taught me how to be a good legal writer. I think I learned more from him than I learned in Legal Skills, and he was very strict and very tough on me. Because of that, I studied the

Casino Night

April 17, 2009: YNLD Casino Night at the Ivy, San Diego. (7:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.)

Don't miss out on YNLD's signature event of the year. Use YNLD Dough to try your luck at Blackjack, Craps, Roulette and Poker! Enter a raffle for prizes including free dinners, spa packages and more. Hosted hors d'oeuvres provided and a no-host bar available.

Space is limited so buy your tickets in advance. To buy tickets [click here](#).

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Continuing Legal Education

April 21, 2009: The Insurance/Bad Faith Section, General Civil Litigation Section and the YNLD present an Update on Punitive Damages. This CLE seminar will take place from 12:00 noon to 1:15 p.m. at the Bar Center. To register [click here](#).

April 22, 2009: The Labor and Employment Section and the YNLD present a 2-part CLE seminar on the fundamentals of labor & employment law. Part II will take place from 12:00 noon to 1:15 p.m. at the Bar Center. More details to come.

May 27, 2009: Fundamentals of Criminal Defense, Part I.

June 24, 2009: Fundamentals of Criminal Defense, Part II.

Fall 2009: Business, Corporate and Transactional Law 101 Series (TBA).

Softball League

The YNLD is looking for players for a Co-Ed Softball Team to play in a VAVI Softball League. Sign-ups are on a first come, first serve basis and will be closed when the team reaches capacity (7 women and 7 men). You must be able to commit to attend most of the games. All skill levels are welcome. If you are interested in playing please e-mail: ynld@sdcb.org

hardest for his classes, I did the best in his classes, and I ended up learning more from his classes than I think any other professor at Cal Western.

If you could go back to law school and do one thing differently, what would it be?

I probably would try to find a way where I could've worked less. I worked all through law school and I wasn't able to stay after classes, make a lot of friends or meet a lot of people. Because of that, I don't know a lot of people I went to law school with.

What has surprised you most about practicing law?

The thing that has surprised me the most about practicing law is in dealing with opposing counsel on cases, it's not as adversarial as I thought it would be. There are a few that just stand their ground, stand their positions, even when you're not discussing something that's adversarial. But for the most part, I was very surprised to see that attorneys are very courteous and cordial with each other in off the record dealings. I was surprised to see that and very happy to see that because it makes you feel a sense of camaraderie.

Describe the best day that you've had as a lawyer.

Six months after being admitted to the bar, I had the opportunity to go to the 9th circuit to argue one of our cases here. I was very nervous. I was in the library before the hearing practicing my argument, and I met a lawyer from Arizona who had been to the 9th circuit hundreds of times. He came to me and said, "Don't worry. You're going to be fine. Everybody has their first time. I'll be watching, and I'll be rooting for you." When I finished the oral arguments, I walked by him and he gave me a thumbs up. It felt great. I was so nervous, and I got up there and I did it and I felt a real sense of accomplishment. And I won. I left there feeling really satisfied and happy to be a lawyer. It just made it all worth it.

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YNLD Co-Ed Softball Team Details:

Season runs from April 20, 2009 to June 29, 2009 (no game on May 25 due to Memorial Day).

Total of nine regular season games.

Games are one hour long and are played at a time TBD from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Team must have 12 to 14 players, half of whom must be females. A maximum of 5 males may be on the field at any one time.

Cost: Approximately \$60 per person, includes a VAV/ Team T-shirt.

Location: Presidio Recreation Center in Old Town, 2811 Jackson St., San Diego, CA 92110

Community Service

Ask-a-Lawyer Program:

The SDCBA's Lawyer Referral and Information Service is hosting a series of Ask-A-Lawyer free legal assistance events over the course of the year. Ask-a-Lawyer events will be held on June 20 at La Jolla Village Square ([click here](#) to register) and September 26 at Village Walk at EastLake ([click here](#) to register).

The primary role of Ask-A-Lawyer attorney volunteers is to help individuals distinguish legal problems from non-legal problems, and steer them in the right direction. Attorney volunteers are not expected to analyze a participant's circumstances and provide them with substantial legal advice. Individuals seeking advice will be notified that your advice is general and intended only as a first step in resolving their legal problems.

Upcoming YNLD Networking Mixers

June 4, 2009: General Meeting and Networking Mixer - location TBD, time: 6:00 p.m.

August 21, 2009: Padres Night – location of pre-game reception TBD, time 5:30 p.m.

September 2, 2009: General and Networking Mixer - location TBD, time: 6:00 p.m.

November 3, 2009: General Meeting and Networking Mixer - location TBD, time: 6:00 p.m.