



# The Legal Connection

where legal technology & people connect

2013-11

## Thankful

This has to be one of the hardest newsletters I have ever put together. In the midst of coordinating with all the contributors; formatting and making sure links are working, my dog, Lady, took sick.

It was unexpected. She had had some tummy troubles towards the end of camping season, so when she took sick again, we thought it was just another stomach bug. We were wrong.

After limiting her food intake, and making sure she was drinking – she seemed to get worse, not better. So on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, I brought her to see our vet.

At first he thought it was just something she ate or an allergic reaction; however, the x-ray we took “just in case” told a completely different story.

In her abdomen was a tumor the size of a softball (if not a bit larger). There was no way to tell if it was cancerous or if it could be operated on at my vet – so off to the special surgery vet clinic we went, hoping beyond hope, it was operable.

The news came back with us having a 50/50 chance of her surviving the surgery; another 50/50 that she’d not die during recovery. While Mr. LT and I tried to figure out how we could manage a \$6,000 - \$8,000 vet bill, our Lady took a turn for the worse – not responding to the IV fluids.

The vet told us it was not what he wanted to see. At that point, it was a decision of keeping her in pain or letting her go ...

While this does not sound like a very “thankful” type of story – it is.

I am thankful for every day of the almost 10 years I had Lady in my life. There was not a day that did not go by that she did not make me laugh – from her uncontrollably loud snoring; to the way she smiled (yes - smiled); to her fluffy pantaloons -- she was the best companion and officemate anyone could wish for.

That said, I could not take the emptiness of her sudden passing. The house seemed like a virtual tomb of sadness – and right at Thanksgiving to boot.

So when we saw that the shelter from which we had adopted Lady was open on Thanksgiving Day – I popped the turkey in the oven and off we went. We didn’t know if we would find a dog – but just getting out of the house seemed to lift everyone’s spirits.

Turns out we did find another bundle of fluff and joy to bring home and our tomb of sadness erupted again with the laughter of my children.

So along with being thankful for my time with Lady; I am also thankful that I work from a home based office, cuz our new little bundle is only 4 weeks old and has already reminded me how much more work puppies are than babies!

Until next month...

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be the name 'A' followed by a flourish.



## Thanks for You. Brought to me by Technology!

Two thirds of my career was spent working in traditional corporate environments, where there was a great deal of camaraderie. When good things or terrible things happened, they were shared. When I had something I couldn't solve or move forward with- I could find a brainstorming partner down the corridor. I had a white board and conference table in my office; they were always in use. That feeling of being "part" of something has always been a driving force in my life. Community is something I value highly.

Today, as a [mostly] solopreneur, I find my community now primarily online or as a phone connection. On a day-to-day basis, the people I am in touch with know me through some technological interface. Some of the people I feel closest to are ones I've never met in person. Others I meet now and then, but only at events. There are clients I've worked with, talked to weekly, for years- and we've never been in the same place at the same time. People I care about, and who care about me. We know each other.

When I first started coaching, I worried about whether I could create relationships if I coached over the phone versus in person. What I've found, over time, is that it's the reverse. In my experience, relationships open up faster when they're remote. I don't know if it's a matter of focus, because there are fewer distractions, or if there's some other magic that happens. I can create a very safe place without having that face to face connection. And connection does happen. Then it lasts.

So, this November, I am simply thankful for all of the dear people in my community. Who make me laugh, and curse, and work harder. The ones who give me courage and support and let me impact their lives. It's such a privilege and pleasure.

Oh, and thankful too, for the technology that keeps us all connected. Even though I curse it regularly, it's the only way we could all get together at my house!

Wishing you and your family, and your community - a lovely Thanksgiving.



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**Barbara Nelson** helps entrepreneurial attorneys move their practices from successful amateur to full pro status. The Practice Target, a 6-month law practice acceleration program, starts in October; schedule a conversation to discuss whether or not it's right for you.

<http://snipurl.com/talk2barbaranow>

# Communities Make My Day Easier

I'm not entirely a solo - I work with another attorney, but he is only in the office part-time. The rest of the time, he works as a general counsel/CFO. This means that two to three days per week, I am the only attorney in my office. If I want to bounce an idea off of someone, or run through an argument, it's generally me just talking to myself. I do that a lot and people are starting to look at me a little crazy.

However, there are some great communities out there, that are full of similarly-situated and usually-helpful others. The one that I post on most often (and where I first met our wonderful editor, Andrea, who now has to pay me \$5 for the compliment) is Solosez, a listserv run by, but not exclusively for members of, the ABA. There, roughly 1700 attorneys discuss various legal issues most practice areas, as well as day-to-day issues and life. There are others. The New Jersey State Bar Association maintains several message boards for the YLD and practice sections. The New York State Bar Association has several mailing lists. I am sure most other state bar associations do as well. There are also several privately-run lists. For trusts and estates attorneys, Wealth Counsel maintains several listservs. Large national bar associations also run their own listservs.

These communities are invaluable, especially for small firms. It is easy to find a new issue in any kind of case - even some clients who come to me for a basic will can present issues that I've never run into, some esoteric real estate issue or investment fund problem. Having one or two attorneys may mean that no matter how deep our total experience is, none of us have seen it. When you have the combined resources of almost two thousand attorneys, it is much more likely that you can find someone who either knows about the issue, knows someone who knows about the issue, or has an idea of how to address it based upon past experiences.

While some lists/communities stay on topic, others (such as Solosez) allow the participants to share in each other's personal lives as well. Birthdays, weddings, and births are celebrated in a group; deaths are mourned together. For people who have their own office and are alone for part of the day, it lets them share stories. It keeps all of us from going crazy.

Not every group is a good fit for every potential member. On Solosez, I have seen attorneys leave of their own volition, and others be asked to leave because they didn't agree with the list's rules or could not abide by its community standards. The trick, as with all things, is to find the place that is right for you and will give you what you are looking for. People looking for substance-only lists should consider bar section listservs in particular, because they tend to stay on-topic more.

To join Solosez, click here: <http://ow.ly/qVAK3>

**Random Musings** ... The number of LSAT takers is down for the 4th straight year ... This column marks my first anniversary of writing for TLC, I do believe that is CrazySexyCool ... I guarantee that at least three people won't get that ... Don't go chasing waterfalls; please stick to the rivers and the lakes that you're used to ... I know that you want to have it your way or nothing at all, but I think you're moving too fast.



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**Justin Meyer** is an attorney in Hauppauge, NY (but as loyal readers, you already knew that). He is licensed in New York, New Jersey, and Florida and he focuses his practice on estate planning and business law. To learn more about him and his practice, please go to <http://www.meyeresq.com> or his blog at <http://legalnotes.meyeresq.com>. You can follow him on Twitter @justinmeyer (because that's where all the cool kids are). For questions, comments, or to complain about this month's drivel, e-mail [jmeyer@meyeresq.com](mailto:jmeyer@meyeresq.com). Hi mom.



# THE DROID LAWYER

## *Thankful.*

I remember 15 or 20 years ago, hunting through the local library for information I needed for my high school French class project. The task was mundane and fruitless at best. The world was a different place. A place where we went to books to gather information; we answered our home phones; and voice mail was an invention only big businesses had. I remember when dad brought home the family's new computer, a Commodore 64. We could finally edit documents outside of a typewriter.

Now, my phone carries more computing power than even the largest array of Commodore computers.

And that's why I'm thankful for technology.

In the shortest space of time in our world's history, we've seen a tremendous springing of technological advancements. These advancements bring ease, development, and productivity to our worlds.

I'm thankful that when I travel to different parts of the country, I can maintain contact with my family via video conferencing systems like Google Hangouts and Skype.

I'm thankful that when I need to send a message, I can simply, easily draft and send a text or email to my wife, colleagues, or friends, which they can receive almost instantaneously.

I'm thankful that through the power of cellular technology, I can speak to anyone, almost anywhere, and at any time. I'm not longer dependent on being tied to my office, home, or, heaven forbid, finding a pay phone.

I'm thankful for tablets that make drafting documents, viewing videos, and a number of other tasks more convenient. I'm thankful that I can carry an entire case file, on a device that's smaller than a sheet of paper.

I'm thankful for streaming media, such as Netflix, Amazon, and Google Play. Now, I can watch programs, movies, and listen to music, without hauling "compact" discs, DVDs, or even records, everywhere.

I'm thankful that technology gives me the ability to bolster my client's case through awesome, Hollywood-quality presentations. Now anyone, for a few hundred dollars, can own high definition video equipment to create movies. I can edit those pictures into the presentation I want.

I'm thankful that technology eliminates, or at least minimizes publishing costs, so great minds can present their written messages. I never imagined a world where the Encyclopedia Britannica - the Bible of all things that ever were - was extinct. I never imagined a world where ordinary people, like you and I, would suddenly become experts in their fields, because of blogging, or vlogging, or podcasting.

I'm thankful for companies like Google, Apple, and Microsoft, who choose to invest in technology and create awesome products.

And I'm thankful that technology gave me an opportunity to "be famous."

Technology is taking us to places far faster than any other time in history. There are some who abhor these technological advances, cleaving to "easier times" of disconnect. But not me, I welcome the advances with open arms.

So, the next time someone suggests that they disconnect, I hope you'll remind them that technology brought us together. And for that, I'm thankful.



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**Jeffrey Taylor:** Jeff Taylor is thankful for readers of his blog, The Droid Lawyer. You can share your thanks with Jeff on Twitter (@jeffrey\_taylor), on Google+ (google.com/+JeffreyTaylor), or via email at [jeff@thedroidlawyer.com](mailto:jeff@thedroidlawyer.com).



## Rural Lawyer: Giving Thanks

One of my flaws (of which there are scores, so figure that this is merely one of a legion) is that my oddly twisted brain has linked giving thanks to (a) an annual tryptophan-induced somnambulation twixt dining table and davenport and (b) the words “so long” and “all the fish”. Neither of which are the noblest of thoughts for this season of reflection.

Yet somewhere between the wisdom of Douglas Adams and that third helping of free-range fowl comes a quiet pause; a moment of deliberate recognition for the wonder of the past year and a time to give thanks for:

- My listserv colleagues - from SoloSez to the MN Bar - who are generous with their time and support.
- That magic moment in every pro bono clinic when that walk-in client transitions from anger/confusion/frustration to the realization that (at least for the duration of this session) they are being heard.
- The matters that pay the bills and the matters that make my mother proud - one day may they be the same.
- The servers, scanners, printers, laptops, tablets, and desktops that keep me and my practice running.
- My virtual staff from my receptionist team who give a voice to my phone system to the woefully underused folks at LegalTypist who put brains behind my voice recognition system (some would call it dictation, but I find that a very scary word with overtones of cigar smoking, flannel suit wearing bosses attempting to seduce nubile, naive secretaries - for the record, I don't own a flannel suit and I have it on good authority, Andrea is not naive).

- A year of trouble-free software and the pig-headed stubbornness that kept me from throwing over my stable, mature versions for the hot new upgrades.
- The mediations that didn't go as planned, for they were learning moments.
- The Board meetings that actually kept to the agenda for they are rare things of great beauty and efficiency.
- Those Bar associations, law schools, private and public institutions working to bring lawyers, not just to rural areas, but to any where there is a lack of access to justice. They give me hope that the small town lawyer is not a dying breed even if the “small town” is nothing more than a 10 block neighborhood otherwise lost in a large metropolis.

Now, before I head off to indulge in more food than is strictly prudent before napping through the second half of whatever sporting event appears before me on a Thursday afternoon, I'd like to wish you all a happy and reflective season of giving thanks.



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**Bruce M. Cameron** Having decided that going to law school and opening a solo law practice would be a sufficient response to the male midlife crisis, Bruce now practices Collaborative Family Law and Estate Planning in rural Minnesota. When not in the law office, he can be found on his small farm where he and his wife are at the beck and call of a herd of horses, a couple of cats, a few dogs and one extremely spoiled parrot. <http://www.rurallawyer.com>



# 4 Tips to save you time when you use Evernote

If you are reading this article, there is excellent chance you already use Evernote. Most people recognize Evernote as a great tool for remembering things and indeed it is. However, Evernote will truly help you be more organized and efficient when you start integrating it with the things you do every day. Now that you use it, here are a few ideas to use it even more efficiently.

## 1. Email directly into Evernote

**What:** Every Evernote user has a specific Evernote email address. Forward the email to your Evernote email address - to specify the destination notebook, append the subject line with the symbol "@" followed by the name of an existing notebook; to add a tag, include "#" followed by an existing tag.

**Why:** It is an easy way to send material to Evernote from anywhere, regardless of the device you are using. It's great for quickly capturing information and emptying your email inbox.

## 2. Use Evernote Web Clipper

**What:** Clip and save any page on the Web right from your browser and send it directly into an Evernote notebook with the appropriate tag. According to Evernote, unlike a typical web bookmark which simply points to a website, which may change or be deleted over time, Evernote's Web Clips create permanent snapshots of a webpage that preserve navigation, text, images and links, and are always fully searchable and available on all your devices anytime you need them.

**Why:** It provides a fast and super-simple way to organize research while moving through a vast number of web pages. Rather than getting lost in all those open tabs you have, you end up with all the important items you found already in Evernote. There is a browser add-on for all the major web browsers. However, I have found the

Chrome version to be particularly useful because it allows you to mark up your clippings with notes to share with someone else or to remind yourself. You can also share interesting things you discover directly on various social media sites.

## 3. Use Note Links

**What:** Note links are, not surprisingly, links to notes in Evernote. You create note links in any desktop version of Evernote by right-clicking on note and choosing "note link". Note links are simply hyperlinks created in Evernote allowing you to connect notes to each other, etc.

**Why:** Note links allow you to link notes to each other and to link to notes from other applications. You can quickly jump between related notes and open up notes from other applications such as your calendar or email program.

## 4. Pick up keyboard shortcuts

**What:** These PC-based keyboard shortcuts allow you glide through Evernote without ever moving the mouse. A few of the shortcuts are: Ctrl-Alt-N to start a new note; Windows-A to paste text into a new or open note; Ctrl-N for a new note; Ctrl-Shift-T: New tag and many more are found on the Evernote website.

**Why:** If you take your hands off the keypad for even a few seconds you lose time and Evernote is really all about being more efficient.

If you like these ideas and crave more, check out the Evernote Blog and the Evernote App Center.



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**Shawn J. Roberts** has 15 years of practical, hands-on legal experience as an attorney working with small businesses and the families that own them. His experience includes helping people start and grow businesses, draft and review contracts, resolve employment issues and litigation. Additionally, Mr. Roberts helps those businesses and families protect their assets through strategic estate planning.



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## Calendar

<b>Fri Dec 6, 2013</b>	11:00am – 12:00pm	<a href="#">#legalchat</a> - Web Presence 101 - Website and Blog
<b>Wed Dec 11, 2013</b>	12:30pm – 2:00pm	<a href="#">Legal Meet Up Lunch hosted by LegalTypist</a> - The Main Event, Plainview
<b>Fri Dec 13, 2013</b>	11:00am – 11:15am	<a href="#">#legalchat</a> - Web Presence 201 - LinkedIn, FaceBook, Twitter, Google+
<b>Fri Dec 20, 2013</b>	11:00am – 12:00pm	<a href="#">#legalchat</a> - Time, Billing and Getting Paid
<b>Fri Jan 10, 2014</b>	11:00am – 12:00pm	<a href="#">#legalchat</a> - Topic: To Be Determined
<b>Mon Feb 3, 2014</b>	7:30pm – 9:00pm	<a href="#">NYC Legal Meet Up Dinner</a> - TBD
<b>Tue Feb 4, 2014</b>	All day	<a href="#">LegalTech NY</a> - Hilton - New York
<b>Wed Feb 5, 2014</b>	12:30pm – 4:00pm	<a href="#">NYC Legal Meet Up Lunch &amp; LTNy Exhibit Walk Through</a> - NYC Hilton



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