

# The LA Organizer

Volume 9, Issue 1

NAPO-LOS ANGELES

October 2001



## Message Regarding September 11, 2001 Tragedy

On behalf of the  
National Association of Professional Organizers, Los Angeles

**WE EXTEND OUR SUPPORT TO OUR NAPO  
COLLEAGUES AND TO ALL THE FAMILIES &  
INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENDURING THE EFFECTS  
OF THE ATTACK ON THE WORLD TRADE CENTER  
AND THE PENTAGON**



## October Meeting Topic Back to School for Organizers II

By: **Lanna Nakone**, Program Director, *Perfection Prevails*

Continuing the theme from last month's meeting, "Back to School For Organizers," we are delighted to have three outstanding members of our chapter willing to share their knowledge with us. Holly Bohn specializes in corporate accounting systems. She will discuss all aspects of budgeting from how to accurately project income and expenses to using a budget to evaluate business performance. Next, Karen Simon will discuss software that she believes are must-haves for any organizing business. Debbie Gilster will speak about "Using Others to Grow Your Business." She will discuss how to know you need help and will share lessons and tips from Veteran PO's (a study she conducted).

Don't miss this meeting. It is like having three meetings in one!

## Meeting Agenda

**Monday, October 22, 2001**

Fourth Monday of every month  
except May & December

- 5:50 Registration  
PLEASE WEAR YOUR BADGES
- 6:15 Meeting begins (PROMPTLY)
  - \* President's Remarks
  - \* Silent Auction
  - \* Member Spotlights
  - \* Announcements
  - \* Member Introductions
  - \* Organizing 101
- 7:05 Break
- 7:15 *Back to School for Organizers II*
- 8:30 Closing Remarks
- 8:40 Meeting Adjourned

### Where:

Olympic Collection Conf. Center  
11301 Olympic Blvd.

Cross street is Sawtelle.

Parking at the center is \$4.

Limited street parking after 6:00 p.m.

Please look for the signs with our meeting room location.

All Professional Organizers and those interested in entering the field are welcome to attend (no clients, please). Business attire is appreciated. Networking table is available to display brochures and flyers. No member products for sale. Meeting charge \$7 for NAPO-LA members; \$15 for visitors and prospective members.

*\*If you wish to make an announcement, please notify Lanna Nakone prior to the meeting at [perfectprevails@cs.com](mailto:perfectprevails@cs.com) or (818) 990-0559.*

## Features

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## Your Habits Will Determine Your Future Successful People Have Successful Habits!



**Dorothy Breininger**, President, NAPO-LA  
*Center for Organization & Goal Planning*

Each week, I meet with two or three clients to discuss their business and personal goals, and of course, something motivational or educational must always be on hand for them. This month I am recommending an excellent book to my clients and would like to share that recommendation with you.

If you are looking to hit your business, personal and financial targets with absolute certainty, read "The Power of Focus," by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, and Les Hewitt. Their first strategy defines how habits (good and bad) can determine your success or lack of it. Below are some common "bad habits" the authors list in their book:

- Not returning phone calls on time.
- Being late for meetings and appointments
- Lack of clarity about expected outcomes and targets and goals.
- Not allowing enough travel time between appointments
- Allowing bills to go unpaid.
- Not consistently following up on overdue receivables.
- Talking instead of listening.
- Forgetting someone's name in 60 seconds after being introduced.
- Hitting the snooze alarm several times in the morning before getting out of bed.
- Working long days with no exercise or regular breaks.
- Not spending enough time with your children.
- Having a "fast food" program too often during the week.
- Leaving home without hugging your partner, child, or pet.
- Making reservations at the last minute.
- Having your cell phone on all the time.
- Answering the phone during mealtime.
- Controlling every decision, especially the small stuff.

If you would like to learn how to correct habits such as those listed above, build on your strengths, create more money with more time off, and eliminate fear and worry, read this amazing compendium. "The Power of Focus" will put you on target.



### September Board Meeting Abbreviated Minutes



**By: Marianna Long**, Secretary, *Spacial Consultants*

1. Discussed Winter Workshop details - full budget to be made next month.
2. Elimination of President-Elect position will be presented to National for consideration and then, upon approval, be presented to chapter for final vote.
3. More fund raising ideas were discussed as well as the possibiltiy of a chapter "store" that would have products available to members for purchase.
4. New members orientation meeting got rave reviews.
5. Past President Dolores Kaytes has just about finished the purging and organizing of chapter materials. She is also working on a new policies and procedures manual with a first draft to be available around May, 2002.

### Membership Report

**By: Mary Xanthos**, VP/Membership,  
*In It's Place*

Total Membership: .....	87
September Meeting Attendance: .....	42
Members .....	38
Guests .....	4

### Winter Workshop Saturday January 26, 2002

#### "Sales 2002"

Marina Beach Marriott  
Marina Del Rey, CA

8:00am- 5:00pm

The focus of Winter Workshop 2002 will be on sales skills and strategies for new and veteran organizer's alike.

More details will be available in upcoming issues of *The LA Organizer*, on the website [www.napola.org](http://www.napola.org), and at monthly meetings.

To volunteer for this event, please contact Sandra Ateca at [SAteca@earthlink.net](mailto:SAteca@earthlink.net)

# October Silent Auction

## Dolores Kaytes

By: Jean Furuya, Special Projects Coordinator, *The Office Jeanie*

*Each month at the LA Chapter meeting, a Professional Organizer is auctioned off. This is a terrific opportunity to invest in your business.*

*This month we have...*

Dolores Kaytes who started Highly Organized, Inc. because she has a passion for efficiency. The impetus for the business was a television magazine piece that aired in 1998, featuring an organizer in New York City. Her stated mission is to help clients feel more in control of their lives, work and offices by teaching them how to save time, energy, money and space.

Dolores has a degree in education. Her first work experience was teaching languages to high school students. She then spent 20 years owning and

managing retail businesses. In 1992, he moved to California from Pennsylvania...and never looked back. In California she became the administrator for a law practice, and board member/resident property manager for her condominium association before opening her own corporation.

In addition to her busy schedule working with clients, giving workshops, presentations and classes, she donates her time as a volunteer for the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation. For the last 3 consecutive years she was also event chairperson for the dinner gala and silent auction for Women in Recovery, a sober living residence.

Other professional accomplishments include board positions for the Los Angeles Chapter of the National Association of Professional Organizers. She planned the Fall Workshop in 1998, and served as Program Director in 1999 and Chapter President in 2000. As immediate past president, she continues to serve on the board and various committees.

All this varied experience is what enables her to so capably inspire and guide her clients to become Highly Organized. The set up and administration of businesses and offices for smooth operation is her focus. Custom filing systems and QuickBooks training are specialties.



As part of our ongoing efforts to contribute to the community as an organization, and to let people know that we, as Professional Organizers, are here to make a difference in our community, you are all invited to join the NAPO-LA Team (Team #3331) to walk together in the 17th Annual LA 10K AIDS Walk on Sunday, Oct. 21st.

The AIDS Walk begins and ends at Paramount Pictures at 5555 Melrose Avenue in Hollywood.

Sign-In is at 8:30 a.m. and the Walk starts at 10:00 a.m. The walk is 10K, which is a bit more than 6 miles, and should take between 2-3 hours. Last

year, there were 27,000 people that walked, raising over \$3 million!

If you are interested, please respond as soon as possible, as time is of the essence. Our Team Leader for AIDS Walk Los Angeles is Jessica Duquette. You can register by emailing her at [jessicaduquette@earthlink.net](mailto:jessicaduquette@earthlink.net) with your first and last name, address and telephone number. You are also welcome to add or transfer yourself, friends, or relatives to the NAPO-LA Team (if they have previously registered as an individual walker).

To register for our team on-line, simply go to the AIDS Walk website at [www.aidswalk.net](http://www.aidswalk.net) and click "REGISTER ON-LINE". Your registration will be sent directly to the

AIDS Walk office and you will be given the opportunity to download your sponsor form. Encourage family members and friends to register online and join our team. The more the merrier.

All walkers must pre-register by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 16th, to receive a sponsor form in the mail. After that date, they ask walkers to use a lined sheet of paper as a sponsor form and register when they arrive at Paramount Pictures on Sunday morning, October 21st.

Good luck, and we will meet at a location to be determined. See you there!

## Family Organizing: Art Supplies

By: **Esther Simon**, *The Traditional Home Organizer*

As a professional organizer and mother of seven, many of my clients ask me very practical questions about daily maintenance. The first one I would like to address is how to keep art supplies and school supplies in one place so you can access them when you need them.

First pinpoint where your children generally do their homework and arts and crafts activities. If it is in the kitchen, den, or in their rooms designate a cabinet, cupboard or bookshelf for at least one dozen plastic containers.

My favorite plastic container is the clear shoe box with the white top. These are generally purchased at Target, or Pic 'N Sav, or any bed and bath outlet. They are as cheap as \$1 each. The reason I like the shoebox size is because they stack and are the right size for any two year old and older. The tops are easy to open and close. Label each box with the name of the item inside. For example, my twelve boxes include crayons, colored pencils, glue, tape, erasers, rules, pens, paint and brushes, cards, stickers, markers, and scissors. If you have more than these items, include more boxes.

For all the coloring books and construction paper, buy plastic magazine holders and turn them so that they fit on the bookshelf and put each type of paper in the individual holder. The more you separate like items together, the easier is the clean up.

Teach each child to clean up and put each item in the correct box. Sorting is always a daily maintenance game. Prepare a box or magazine holder for finished items. Don't return used or broken supplies.

Keep the place clean and pretty. Children like working in a clean environment. That is why they always want a new toy, (because it looks clean and new). Starting good habits for your children is a habit that will last a long time and promotes good beginning organizing skills.

*In each issue, this column will focus on a different aspect of organizing large families. If there is a topic you would like covered, please send an e-mail request to Esther Simon at tradhomorg@aol.com*

## "How Can You Raise Your Fees During The Year To Old Clients?"

By: **Nancy Miller**, *Round, Miller and Assoc.*

This is perhaps one of the most sensitive questions in any business. As your business grows, how do you raise your fees while respecting the clients who helped you grow?

The immediate question would be: "Why is there an increase in fees?"

Have you maxed out the billable hours per week, undergone a significant change, added value, or is it the end of year?

All of these questions probably warrant an increase in fees, but each are handled differently. Let's look at some specific examples:

1. Have you maxed out your billable hours? Remember the Pareto principle (80/20). Use this opportunity to fire some of your clients (slow pay/no pay or those that are more of a problem

Continued on Page 5

## A "Mousie" Organizing Story

By: **Diane Ridley**, *Home in Harmony*

One of my first gigs as a home organizer was working with a woman who said that she "needed her whole house" organized. What people say and what they really mean can be soooooo far apart. What it turns out they really want is, well.....maybe someone to commiserate with, or, maybe something else.

On the other hand, some people are really serious and ready to get out of their mess. Even though this lady showed me every room and talked at great length about the clutter problems of each room, we ended up focusing on one room only. She really wanted to remove the shelving in her living room and was ecstatic when I did that.

After I removed the myriad of items from the shelves and then removed the shelves themselves, she ordered me to "Go wash your hands, and I'm serious about that," which I immediately did. Later in the day she explained the rodent infestation problems she had been having. It seems that an unknown number of house mice had invaded her couch and shelving and had lived there for several months!

Since she couldn't bear to touch anything in the area she decided to hire an organizer to do the dirty deed. In this case....me! Since rodent feces can be noxious I should have been wearing gloves, but, of course, I didn't know what I was getting into until it was too late. What did I learn? **ASK MORE QUESTIONS!**



Continued from Page 4

than profit).

How many billable hours are you planning to work? In the business plan, have you calculated the number of hours you plan to work each week-20, 15 or perhaps 10 at \$X. Once you consistently reach those billable hours per week then raise your hourly rate.

2. If you bring in an associate, you can increase your rate and bill your associate at your old rate. This way, if a client is price fixated, you can still keep the customer happy by offering the associate's services. If your client insists on dealing with you personally, then they'll understand that you are in demand and must be willing to pay for your expertise.



3. Have you achieved a notable achievement? For instance, you've just been elected president of NAPO-LA. Looking at your schedule, you calculate that with your volunteer work and billable hours, you'll be working 25 hours per day. Physically not possible!

This strategy may need to be accomplished over a period of time, rather than a sudden announcement. Begin by using the media to announce your exalted rank. Local newspapers may even write an article about you, the local business' accomplishments. Get reprint permission from the newspaper and send a copy of the article to your clients. Approximately 30 days later, notify clients about your rate increase.

4. You have just added a second business location, an associate or some piece of equipment that will help you perform your organizational duties more

efficiently. This strategy is very similar to #3.

5. End of the year increase. It is very common for organizations to increase their prices at the end of the year. If you feel that this would be a good time, let your customer know about the increase 30-60 days prior to the increase.

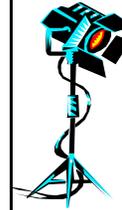
One acquaintance of mine started her business on July 1st. Each July 1st, she sends out an e-mail or letter to her database with a year-end letter. This letter reminds me of a family Christmas letter. The letter reminisces about past accomplishments and outlines plans for the next 12 months. As she has done this for many years, it would be very easy to include an announcement about the rate increase.

6. Some service providers only bill "new" customers at the increased rate and any current clients are billed at the old rate.

You can use any of these opportunities to contact your past clients. Talk with them to find out how they are doing. If you find that there is an opportunity to provide new services, you might want to suggest that they set an appointment now. This technique is a good technique to use when you have a slow time in your business. Are summers slow for you because parents are spending vacation time with kids? Is December a slump because of social activities or the holidays? Seriously consider offering a special rate for these periods to help with cash flow. If past clients don't have any further business for you, this might be a good time to ask for the testimonial letter or referrals.

There are other methods of increasing your rate without raising your actual billing rate. In the computer industry, technicians charge for travel time to the client's office. Are you charging for telephone consultations? Are you billing for all of the time you are at the clients, or are you giving some of the time away?

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS



### October Meeting

**Donna McMillan**

**Max Miller**

**Robin Davi**

Are you billing for fraction of an hour or only at hourly increments? Are you charging for prep work that you do-shopping/errands for supplies, paperwork in your office?

One of the best strategies for making a client happy is to notate on the invoice what your actual time or activity was. If you took longer than expected or did something that they didn't ask for, list the item and then put "no charge" after the item. The next time you provide the service, you can charge for it and the client is not surprised.

There are some wonderful programs like TimeSlips® that accurately track ALL of the time (minute by minute) that you expend on behalf of the client and creates an invoice so the client understands just how much "extra" time you've spent and need to be compensated for.

Last, but certainly not least, keep your clients informed of your rate changes so that they're aware of what's happening before it affects them personally.

*Throughout the next year, responses to the "Ask the Organizer" column question "REFERRAL FEES: What Is Your Scale?" will be included. Send your submissions to Glorya Belgrade Schklair, The Practical Organizer, glorya@schklair.com*

# October's Featured Organizer

By: Jan Benadom, *Staff Writer*

**Donna McMillan**  
**McMillan & Company**  
**Professional Organizing**

West Los Angeles, CA is far from the family farm in the center of Kansas where Donna grew up. She and her two younger sisters helped their parents year-round during their childhood. This strong work ethic formed the basis for her organizing business today.

Donna worked 20 years in the corporate world and five years with Mary Kay Cosmetics which provided excellent sales training. When her corporate position was eliminated in 1984, she immediately established a new, unique business. Her entrepreneurial spirit and extensive sales and office/business management skills helped to build its foundation.

When her first client visited Donna to pick up a completed typing project, she was amazed at how organized Donna's new home office was. The client, a florist, then asked for help to "fix" her own filing cabinet and described it as overflowing with articles and photos of floral designs. From that

initial contact, Donna added organizing to her Services Menu.

Although she started her business 17 years ago, she didn't discover NAPO until 1991. Through a friend, Donna heard about a radio interview with Tom Nevermann (then NAPO's President). A week later, another friend referred her to Ann Gambrell, one of NAPO's Founding Members. Ann kindly invited her to a local monthly meeting, and that first night, Donna joined NAPO and the L.A. Chapter.

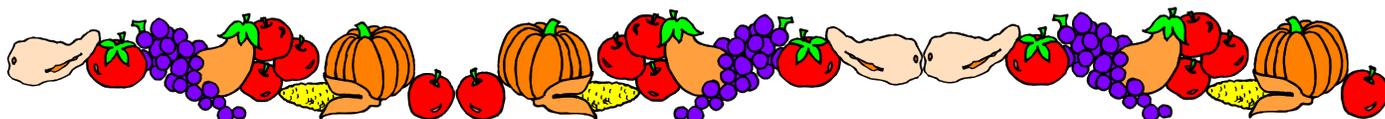
As one of the original generalist organizers, Donna now fulfills her childhood dream of "making a difference" for individuals in both companies and homes. Also, during the last seven years, countless professional organizers have benefited from her training workshops and telephone coaching. She feels continuing education is essential to learn of new techniques, products, and professional services to benefit clients and their assorted personalities and needs.

Her advice to new NAPO members:

1. True professionals never stop investing time, energy and money in their business.
2. Seek training in organizing techniques and business skills - attend NAPO meetings, conferences, Toastmasters, and classes for new business owners and organizers.
3. Hire a private coach immediately, stay focused and motivated, keep moving ahead.
4. Volunteer on committees in a local chapter or NAPO National; support our industry; grow personally and professionally.
5. Build strong relationships with colleagues (locally and nationally).

You may contact Donna at [organized@compuserve.com](mailto:organized@compuserve.com) or <mailto:Donna@organizer4me.com>. Her website is [www.organizer4me.com](http://www.organizer4me.com).

*At every Chapter meeting, one lucky organizer can win the chance to be interviewed for this column. Just drop your business card in the marked container. Good luck!*



OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
<b>Clean Your Files Month</b>	<b>World Communication Month</b>	<b>Stress Free Family Holiday Month</b>
7-13 Get Organized Week	8-14 Pursuit of Happiness Week	10th Human Rights Day
8-14 Home-Based Business Week	15th America Recycles Day	21st Look on the Bright Side Day
19th Evaluate Your Life Day	23rd Buy Nothing Day	30th Stay at Home Because You Are Well Day
22nd 2:45 Board Meeting 6:15 Chapter Meeting	26th 2:45 Board Meeting 6:15 Chapter Meeting	No Chapter Meeting

*Happy Birthday!*

October

Maxine Ordesky 1st  
 Robin Valdez 2nd  
 Beverly Clower 4th  
 Evelyn M. Gray 4th  
 Lisa Sarasohn 9th  
 Margie Stewart 16th  
 Holly Bohn 17th  
 Gayle Chapin 24th  
 Karen Simon 26th  
 Mary Ann Lessley 28th  
 Chris McKenry 28th  
 Toni Scharff 31st

November

Jessica Duquette 2nd  
 Susan Johnson 5th  
 Lynn Hall 6th  
 Janet Aird 9th  
 Robin L. Davi 14th  
 Sally Hulem 16th  
 Steve Skidmore 30th

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Fundraising	Chris McKenry
Golden Circle Advisor	Ann Gambrell
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New Member Coordinator	Marilyn Crouch
New Member Orientation	Jean Furuya, Ann Gabrell
Prospective Member Coordinator	Robin Davi
Public Relations/Advertising	Heather Chapman
Special Projects Coordinator	Jean Furuya
Website Coordinator	Toni Scharff
Workshop Director	Sandra Ateca

**LOCAL REFERRAL  
HOTLINE REPORT**

August 2001

By: Lisa Sarasohn, Hotline Rep., Hire Order

**The Stats:**

Inquiries for Organizers: 4  
 Inquires for Misc. Information: 1  
 Clients Contacted: 3  
 Message Left Only: 2  
 Organizers Referred: 6

**Cities Referred To:**

Moorpark, Los Angeles

**Members Referred:**

Xanthos, Rubin, Klein, Stewart,  
 Benadom, Whitle

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NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Individual Annual Dues (renews on member's anniversary).....	\$200
Associate Annual Dues-Corporate .....	\$550
Associate Annual Dues-Branch .....	\$150
Associate Annual Dues-Local .....	\$250
New Member one-time processing fee .....	\$ 20
National NAPO Name Badge.....	\$ 10

**MISSION STATEMENT - NAPO**

The mission of the National Association of Professional Organizers is to encourage the development of Professional Organizers; promote recognition of, and to advance the professional organizing industry.

NAPO-Los Angeles

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Los Angeles, CA 90064  
(213) 486-4477 HOTLINE  
www.napola.org

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

National Membership required. Includes electronic newsletter.

Individual Annual Dues (Oct. 1st - Sept. 30th).....	\$ 75
Out-of-State Ind. Annual Dues (Oct. 1st - Sept. 30th) .....	\$ 50
Associate Member Annual Dues (Oct. 1st - Sept. 30th) .....	\$150
New/Lapsed Member processing fee .....	\$ 10
Meeting Fee .....	\$ 7

NON-MEMBERS

Newsletter Subscription (annual) .....	\$ 25
Meeting Visitor Fee .....	\$ 15

**MISSION STATEMENT - NAPO-LA**

NAPO-LA is an organization dedicated to bringing Southern California Area Organizers together through networking, education, professional growth, industry updates, support, and public awareness.

*The LA Organizer* is published monthly except in December. The articles are copyrighted, with all rights reserved.

**SUBMISSIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER**

GUIDELINES

To submit, e-mail the editor, Susan Pitcher: spitcher@earthlink.net. Please remove font changes. Clean text only documents will be accepted.

DEADLINE- \*\*\*October 23, 2001\*\*\*

This includes all articles, advertisements, photos, and announcements

Member advertisement prices: \$5.00/3 line classified; \$10.00/business card size (2" x 3.5"); \$25.00/quarter page; \$35.00/half page ad; \$50.00/full page ad; \$85.00/full page insert.

Non-member advertisement prices: \$10.00/3 line classified; \$20.00/business card; \$50.00/quarter page ad; \$70.00/half page ad; \$100.00/full page ad; \$150.00/full page insert.

