



CALSS
 Colorado Association
 of
 Legal Support Staff

DeNovo

Colorado Association of Legal Support Staff

2010-2011, Volume 3

September 2011



Contents:

From the Editor-----1
Grammar Queen-----1
On The Lighter Side-----2
Upcoming Events-----4
**How to Reach Your CALSS Executive
 Committee-----5**
About De Novo-----5

From the Editor

We are always looking for contributors to the De Novo. If you would like to submit an article to be considered for publication, please contact me at vschermerhorn@sgrllc.com. I would love to hear from you about any learning experience you have had, a seminar you attended, or a matter of general interest to De Novo readers. Also, if there is anything you would like to see information on, please send me suggestions and I will see what I can find on the topic. I look forward to hearing from you!

Ginny Schermerhorn, Bulletin Editor

Grammar Queen

By Darlene Johnson

Colorado Bar Association CLE Publications Department

When you're discussing politics or religion or even which contestant should win on Next Food Network Star, sometimes you have to agree to disagree. But grammatically speaking, I would say let's agree *not* to disagree — at least when it comes to subjects and verbs.

It is generally easy to match a subject with its verb. If the subject is singular, so is the verb: "A small amount is allocated to income." If the subject is plural, so is the verb: "Small

amounts are allocated to income.” That’s the basic type of subject-verb agreement that we all learn early on.

Still, things can get a bit sticky if the subject and verb lose track of each other because of extra words or phrases in between. Just this week, an author wanted us to use this sentence: “Under the general rule in Colorado, a small amount of required plan distributions are allocated to income.” He didn’t look closely enough to see that the (singular) word “amount” was the actual subject, rather than the word “distributions,” and the sentence should read: “. . . a small amount of required plan distributions is allocated to income.” The key is to find the subject and the verb, ignore all the words in between, and make the verb match the subject.

Of course, that’s not quite the end of the story. Another subject-verb agreement conundrum can arise when the subject is a singular word made up of individual units, such as “staff,” “jury,” or “committee” — otherwise known as collective nouns. Obviously, there is more than one person on a staff, jury, and committee, so do such words take a singular verb or a plural one?

There are times when a committee action is collective, so the singular verb works fine: “The committee is meeting at noon.” But what about a committee that is not very harmonious? “The meeting is so rancorous that the committee is throwing things.” Actually, the committee itself may not be throwing things, but at least some of the individual committee members are. Some are probably ducking behind the flipchart, while others are crawling beneath the table. Obviously, the committee has diverged from collective actions to individual ones.

At this point, it’s time to attribute the actions to the individuals who are responsible: “The meeting is so rancorous that the committee members are throwing things” — a plural subject with a plural verb. As a technical point, it would also be grammatically correct to say, “. . . the committee are throwing things” since the individual action is implied. But this sounds awkward, and American preference is to put the committee members in the sentence (and let them take some responsibility for their appalling behavior, in this case).

P.S. I’m so glad to be back! I’ve missed your comments and questions. Please feel free to send either one to djohnson@cobar.org.

On The Lighter Side

The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible.

- George Burns

<><>

Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people only once a year.

- Victor Borge

<><>

Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint.
- Mark Twain

<><>

By all means, marry. If you get a good wife, you'll become happy; if you
get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher.

- Socrates

<><>

I was married by a judge. I should have asked for a jury.

- Groucho Marx

<><>

My wife has a slight impediment in her speech. Every now and then she
stops to breathe..

- Jimmy Durante

<><>

I have never hated a man enough to give his diamonds back.

- Zsa Zsa Gabor

<><>

Only Irish coffee provides in a single glass all four essential food groups:
alcohol, caffeine, sugar and fat.

- Alex Levine

<><>

My luck is so bad that if I bought a cemetery, people would stop dying.

- Rodney Dangerfield

<><>

Money can't buy you happiness But it does bring you a more pleasant
form of misery.

- Spike Milligan

<><>

Until I was thirteen, I thought my name was SHUT UP .

- Joe Namath

<><>

I don't feel old. I don't feel anything until noon. Then it's time for my nap.

- Bob Hope

<><>

I never drink water because of the disgusting things that fish do in it.

- W. C. Fields

<><>

We could certainly slow the aging process down if it had to work its way through Congress.

- Will Rogers

<><>

Don't worry about avoiding temptation. As you grow older, it will avoid you.

- Winston Churchill

<><>

Maybe it's true that life begins at fifty .. But everything else starts to wear out, fall out, or spread out..

- Phyllis Diller

<><>

By the time a man is wise enough to watch his step, he's too old to go anywhere.

- Billy Crystal

<><>

And the cardiologist's diet: If it tastes good, spit it out.

- Unknown

<><>

UPCOMING EVENTS:

September 16-17, 2011 will be the CALSS Fifteenth Annual Meeting and Educational Conference and will take place at The Embassy Suites in Fort Collins, CO. I hope to see you all there!!!!.

HOW TO REACH YOUR CALSS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

President: Mark Donovan
Mile High Association of Legal Support Staff
(Denver)
999 Emerson Street, #10
Denver, CO 80218
Cell: 303-570-6788
Phone: 303-436-9121
Fax: 303-436-9648
E-mail: MED@H-L-MLaw.org

President-Elect: Audrey Brekel
Mile High Association of Legal Support Staff
(Denver)
Holme Roberts & Owen LLP
Legal Secretary
1801 13th St., Ste. 300
Boulder, CO 80302
Cell: 303-618-7418
Phone: 303-417-8502
Fax: 303-417-8550
E-mail: audrey.brekel@hro.com

Vice President: Sherry McWethy
Larimer-Weld Association of Legal Support Staff
(Fort Collins)
Colorado Code Publishing Co.
Office Manager/Editor
323 W. Drake Road, Suite. 200
Fort Collins, CO 80526
Cell: 970-691-9229
Phone: 970-498-9229
Fax: 970-493-2550
E-mail: colocode3@frii.com

Secretary: Cathy Vlasak, PLS
Larimer-Weld Association of Legal Support Staff
(Fort Collins)
415 S. Howes St. #609N
Fort Collins, CO 80521
Phone: 970-498-7435
E-mail: cvasak@larimer.org

Treasurer: Lisa Ritter, PLS
Larimer-Weld Association of Legal Support Staff
(Denver)
Liggett, Smith & Johnson, P.C.
Legal Assistant
425 Mulberry Street, #112
Fort Collins, CO 80521
Cell: 970-227-1047
Phone: 970-482-9770
Fax: 970-482-0339
E-mail: lrutter@ftccolaw.com

Parliamentarian: Pauli Ingwersen
Member at Large (Colorado Springs)
Holland & Hart LLP
Executive Assistant/Regional Office Administrator
90 S. Cascade Avenue, Suite 1000
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
Cell: 719-232-9640
Phone: 719-475-6487
Fax: 719-634-2461
E-mail: pingwersen@hollandhart.com

ABOUT DeNOVO:

De Novo is a bi-monthly publication of the Colorado Association of Legal Support Staff (CALSS), published in odd-numbered months. Deadline for submission is the 15th day of the month preceding publication (i.e., February 15 for the March issue). The information in this publication is intended for general guidance, and should not be construed as legal advice. CALSS accepts no responsibility for loss to any person or entity as a result of action or inaction based on the use of any information in this publication.

Articles that appear in *De Novo* do not necessarily reflect the view of CALSS, nor does their publication constitute an endorsement.

An annual subscription to *De Novo* is provided to members of CALSS as part of their membership dues. Printed copies may be obtained from the editor.

All correspondence regarding content should be directed to the editor. Original articles may be submitted for publication, as well as reprints of previously published articles. In the latter case, please include author and publication information so appropriate reprinting permission may be obtained.

Colorado Association of Legal Support Staff
PO Box 2835
Denver, Colorado 80201-2835
Be sure to visit the CALSS web site at www.calss.org

De Novo staff:
Ginny Schermerhorn, Editor
Phone: 303-320-0509
Fax: 303-320-0210
vschermerhorn@sgrllc.com