



# Key Note



Volume 81

Northeast Texas Association of Paralegals, Inc.  
*An Affiliate of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.*  
Editor, Mona Hart Tucker, ACP

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## *From the Hart*

Our membership meetings will crank up again next Wednesday, Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>. It's been a long dry spell, and we look forward to getting re-energized.



The new NTAP website will officially be launched this weekend. On Monday, you should receive an email inviting you to go to [www.ntaparalegals.org](http://www.ntaparalegals.org). Browse around and see what you think.

We've been working with Camden Place, the same company that does the Paralegal Division's website, and they've come up with some great ideas for us. The site has certain interactive features, which will allow you to RSVP for meetings and other events, register for seminars, and update your own information if changes need to be made.

I think you will really like what's been done, so watch for the e-blast announcing the launch. Your email will be personalized to include a password so that you can access the Members Only area of the site.

And please note that the web address ends in **.ORG**, and no longer **.COM**. The **.COM** site is still there, although sadly out of date. It's a long story.

Oh, and while you're on the new site, please RSVP to help with the Veterans Estate-Planning Clinic. The date has changed to November 5<sup>th</sup>, and we'd love to have your help. We're going to need all of you to make this a successful event.

Mona Hart Tucker, ACP  
President

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### A Cite-Checking Checklist

*By Daphne Drescher*

I used to love the library as a kid, so spending time in law libraries seems like a natural progression for me. Although in this digital age, I spend less time in a physical law library than a virtual one.

I don't know about you, but one of the tasks I am frequently called on to perform in my paralegal career is cite checking legal briefs. At one of my previous law firms, cite checking was a primary duty of the paralegal department and for some of us, it comprised the largest volume of our tasks in any given week. Now that I'm a contract paralegal, I still find myself performing a lot of cite checking for my attorney clients.

**What it is?** So what exactly do we mean when

we talk about cite checking? Cite checking involves reviewing and verifying the accuracy and completeness of all citations contained in a legal brief or memorandum. It typically has two elements: 1) verifying citations to the case law, statutes and other authorities contained in the memorandum; and 2) verifying citations to the record.

**Why is this important?** It is important because in motion practice, accuracy counts! Your attorney may be more focused on the content of his or her arguments than on the details of all those cites. It is surprisingly easy for little typos to slip into citations or quotes, even for the most meticulous writer. A second pair of eyes is often needed to spot and correct those errors. An accurate brief makes our supervising attorneys look good. An accurate brief is in the best interest of our clients. And finally, an accurate brief makes us look good too! Errors in citations may not lose a motion, but they certainly do nothing to enhance one's reputation for professionalism.

So without further ado, here are some tips.

#### **Checklist for Cite Checking Best Practices:**

1. Gather all case law, statutes and other authorities cited in the brief so you can check them more efficiently.
2. Verify the accuracy of the case name, reporter, page number and year - or author, title and publication year - of each source.
3. Review all case and statute citation formats for conformity to whichever citation scheme your attorney prefers. I became most familiar with the Bluebook early in my career, and that is still the format I use, but defer to your attorney's preference.
4. For each case citation, make sure the cited page of the case accurately reflects the content in the brief.
5. Carefully check each quotation word for word to assure that it is a verbatim reflection of the language in the case or statute, complete with accurate spelling and punctuation. Use appropriate ellipses and brackets when language is omitted.

6. If requested by your attorney, Shepardize or Keycite each source to assure it is still good law.

7. If requested by your attorney, mark all cases, statutes and treatises in the brief in order to create tables of authorities.

8. Gather all supporting evidence, whether in the form of declaration exhibits, request for judicial notice exhibits, or separate statements of undisputed facts.

9. Review each record citation to assure the correct exhibit and page have been cited.

10. Carefully review all quotations for accuracy to assure the quote in the brief is a verbatim reflection of the language in the exhibit.

11. Compile all exhibits with appropriate slip sheets.

12. If required by your jurisdiction, mark or bracket all referenced pages and lines in preparation for filing with the court.

By following these best practices, you can help assure the accuracy of your attorney's motion prior to filing with the court, assist your firm's clients with their cases, and put your own most professional foot forward. It's a win-win for all!

Daphne Drescher is a Virtual Litigation Paralegal based in California, and owner of Drescher ProParalegal at <http://proparalegal.com>.



## *September Meeting*

We are firing up our membership meetings again on Wednesday, Sept. 21, with a gathering at the Longview Community Center at noon. We will have a round-table discussion of topics that you will find very helpful in your workday - Adobe, e-filing, so many things that we deal with constantly. Come sit in on a very informative session. Lunch is available for \$5.00 per person. Please RSVP to [sandi.clarke@boon.law.com](mailto:sandi.clarke@boon.law.com).



## **OUR VETERANS NEED YOU!**

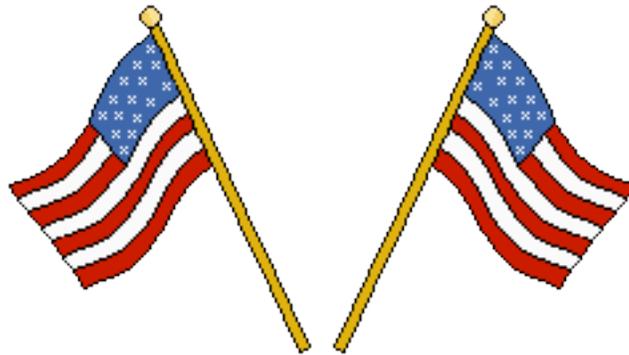
We are planning to have a pro bono estate-planning clinic for area veterans. The place is the Marine Corps League building on Alpine in Longview. The date has changed, and is now Saturday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, so please clear your calendar and participate with us.

We need all of you who possibly can to help out.

We have some attorneys lined up, but will need more, so please ask whether your attorney will give up a Saturday for our veterans.

There are so many ways you can help. This list is just the beginning...

- Attorneys to consult with veterans
- Paralegals to prepare documents
- Notaries
- Tables and chairs
- Computer printers
- Copy machines
- Reams of copy paper
- Simple refreshments, paper goods
- Advertising
- Extra hands (to witness documents, help mobility-impaired persons, be sure refreshments are replenished, etc.)





# TEXAS ADVANCED PARALEGAL SEMINAR

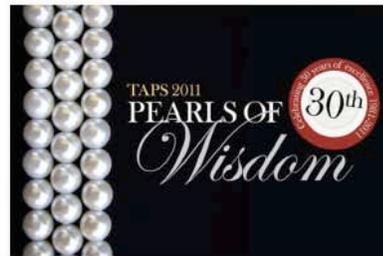
*Sponsored by the Paralegal Division, State Bar of Texas*

**October 5–7, 2011**

**Marriott Hotel & Golf Club  
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**TAPS is a 3-day multi-track CLE seminar providing:**

- ▶ Networking opportunities with other Texas Paralegals
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*See [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org) in June 2011 for complete registration packet.*



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# CLE Calendar

For additional information about CLE across the State see the SBOT - PD web site at [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org). Also, don't forget that the PD and NALA both offer on-line CLE.

**(Fort Worth) Texas Advanced Paralegal Seminar (TAPS) Oct. 5-7, 2011, Marriott Hotel & Golf Club.** Details at [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org).

**(Online) Texas Bar CLE free online seminar.** TexasBarCLE offers a complimentary half hour of participatory MCLE credit. You will find a new topic available every other month. The current topic is "Business Disparagement and the Internet: Libel and Slander/Injury to the Brand." [www.texasbarcle.com](http://www.texasbarcle.com).

Check out the **Ten Minute Mentor** on [www.texasbar.com](http://www.texasbar.com). These instructional video presentations are from leading lawyers in their areas of expertise. Each presentation is typically short (around 10 minutes or less), practical, and free. Viewing presentations qualifies for MCLE self-study credit only. Topics available include Daubert challenges, petitions for review, bankruptcy issues, and many more.

**(Online) NALA Campus Live!** has many topics to choose from, and the Texas Board of Legal Specialization has approved certain programs for certification and re-certification. More information is available at [www.nala.org](http://www.nala.org).

**(Online) Free Webinars** sponsored by Litigation Solution, Inc. Contact Todd Kelly at KTS Litigation Support, [mtkelly@ktslitigationsupport.com](mailto:mtkelly@ktslitigationsupport.com), for a schedule and to register.

Articles published herein do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Northeast Texas Association of Paralegals. Calendar listings and seminars should not be considered as endorsement of any such program or seminar.

## NTAP EMPLOYMENT REFERRALS

One of the benefits of your membership is NTAP's employment referral service. We receive calls from firms offering employment opportunities. If you are seeking a position or considering a change, we encourage you to use NTAP's employment referral service. If your firm is searching for qualified paralegals, ask your attorney or firm administrator to let us know about current openings.

If you are interested in being listed with the service, mail a current resume and contact information to:

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