



Key Note



Volume 83

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

Once upon a time, a high school diploma was all one needed to land a decent job. Then, more and more firms began requiring applicants to have at least a few semesters of college. Now, so many of them want to see some type of initials after your name. Let's face it, the job market isn't what it used to be, and competition is stiff. If you haven't already earned the CP or RP designation, what are you waiting for? There's no time like the present. I worked in this field 20 years before I gathered my courage and sat for the exam. Don't follow my example of delay. Just do it!



Food for thought, from Vicki Voisin's *Paralegal Strategies*:

Credentials do matter. Credentials say a lot about you: your depth of knowledge, credibility, determination, diligence, and more. Don't kid yourself ... if you're in competition for a job with a person who has the same amount of education and work experience, your credentials will give you the leg up you'll need.

Mona Hart Tucker, ACP
President



2011 Executive Committee

President - Mona H. Tucker, ACP
1st Vice President - Ginger D. Gage, ACP
2nd Vice President - Sandi Clarke, CP
Secretary - Sandi Clarke, CP
Treasurer - Elisha Calhoon, CP
NALA Liaison - Javan Johnson, ACP

2011 Chairpersons

Parliamentarian - Javan Johnson, ACP
Employment - Andrea Brunson, CP
Auditor - Andrea Brunson, CP
Scholarship - Javan Johnson, ACP
Technology - Elisha Calhoon, CP
Publicity - Gail Love, CP
Hospitality - Ginger Gage, ACP; Sandi Clarke, CP; & Javan Johnson, ACP



Nominations Requested

Voting members should have received a straw ballot recently. If you haven't already turned it in, please bring it to the November meeting. Any ballots turned in after November 16th will not be considered. If you have any questions, or did not receive your ballot, please contact Pam Matthews at pammatthews@siebman.com.



WELCOME

Welcome to our new member, Georgina Neuse. Georgina is a legal assisting student at Kilgore College and works at Flowers Davis in Longview.



Northeast Texas Association of Paralegals, Inc.
Minutes of the Membership Meeting
Wednesday, October 19, 2011

The monthly membership meeting of the Northeast Texas Association of Paralegals was held at the Longview Community Center on

Wednesday, October 19, 2011.

Those in attendance were Mona Tucker, Sandi Clarke, Ginger Gage, Elisha Calhoun, Lori Campbell, Cindy Van Blaricom, and Javan Johnson.

Guests in attendance were Georgina Neuse, Beth Goodman, Pam Maggard, and speaker Tracy Almanza, ACP.

President Tucker welcomed members and guests and called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

Reports:

Secretary - President Tucker announced that the minutes from the September membership meeting were printed in the *Key Note* and on the tables and asked the membership for approval of same. Ginger Gage made a motion to approve the minutes; Sandi Clarke seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved as printed.

Membership - Sandi Clarke announced that she has received one new application for membership, from Georgina Neuse, and that she qualified for student membership. Sandi Clarke made a motion to accept Georgina for student membership; Ginger Gage seconded the motion, and the membership voted to approve Georgina as a student member.

Treasurer - President Tucker discussed the Financial Report for September 2011, provided by Elisha Calhoun. After reviewing the report, Ginger Gage made a motion to accept the report; Sandi Clarke seconded the motion and the report was approved, pending audit.

Employment - Job Bank Chair Andrea Linton-Brunson was not in attendance but President Tucker reported that there were no new jobs in the job bank.

Education - Ginger Gage announced that the speaker for next month will be Devin Huggins of the Erskine McMahan firm, who will give an informative speech on the recent *Escobedo* opinion (paid vs. incurred).

Old Business - There was no old business.

New Business - President Tucker discussed the recent TAPS seminar and how informative the seminar was, encouraging the membership to attend next year and also to join the Paralegal Division.

Rainbow Room - President Tucker advised the membership that we will be taking stuffed animals to the Rainbow Room again this year for the Christmas holiday. She encouraged the membership to bring their stuffed animals or donations to the December meeting.

Wills for Heroes - President Tucker announced that the date for the Wills for Heroes clinic had to be moved to November 19th and that it will be held at the Marine Corp. building on Alpine Road. She also advised the membership that Stevens Love is donating three cases of copy paper for use at the clinic and that TLF Office Supply is providing a printer/copier. President Tucker encouraged all members to come help at the clinic, as volunteers are desperately needed.

Deadlines - President Tucker announced that the next board meeting will be on November 2nd and the deadline to submit articles for the *Key Note* is November 4th.

Speaker - Ginger Gage introduced speaker Tracy Almanza, ACP, who presented a very helpful and informative speech regarding the recent changes to the probate code.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:52 p.m.

Sandi Clarke, CP
NTAP Secretary



Legal Assisting Classes at Kilgore College

Registration for spring is underway, and there are some interesting things going on in the Legal Assisting Department.

LGLA 2333 - Advancing Document Preparation is being taught as a hybrid course by Mona Jimmerson. It will meet four nights and the rest will be done at on your own. You will have to download the ProDoc program, so make sure you have a computer with Internet Connection readily available. Talk to Mr. Whitehead if you also need the night Legal Writing - he can make things work!

LGLA 2335 Advanced Civil Lit is being offered by Javan Johnson. This will be the first time it's taught. If you know people who have graduated

already, let them know - it will be great continuing education

LGLA 2380 - Paralegal Coop. You must have a job working at least 20 hours a week in a field that has something to do with the legal field. It doesn't have to be a law office, but it could be insurance, a title office, etc. This is also a hybrid. You will come the first week and then toward the end of the semester to make a presentation. Your supervisor will have to sign off on your work. You will have several things to do in e-learning also.



PLAN AHEAD FOR THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

In recent years, NTAP members have brought stuffed animals for the Rainbow Room kids. We want to continue that tradition, and ask that while you're out shopping, you pick up one or two to contribute to these children. We'll collect them at our Christmas party and deliver them for you.



**Now We're
Cookin'**



Sandi made this delicious stroganoff for our October membership meeting.

Chicken Stroganoff

Sandi Clarke

- 4 chicken breast halves
- 1 (.7 oz.) pkg. (dry) Italian salad dressing mix
- 1 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 stick butter

Cut chicken into bite-sized chunks and add to crock pot, along with butter and Italian dressing mix; cook on low 5-7 hours. Approximately 1 hour before serving, add cream cheese and mushroom soup and mix well. Let simmer on medium and serve over noodles or rice. Serves 4.





Commercial Bankruptcy New APC Course

A new Advanced Paralegal Certification (APC) course in Commercial Bankruptcy under Chapters 7 and 11 of the *United States Bankruptcy Code* is now available to paralegals seeking advanced certification in this specialty practice area.

The new course focuses on bankruptcies of business debtors. Chapter 7 provides for debt relief and liquidation of an enterprise's assets. Chapter 11 gives a business protection from creditors and a chance to prepare a plan of reorganization to pay debts and stay in business.

There are nine modules of study in the new course: 1) The Bankruptcy Estate; 2) Avoiding Powers; 3) Initial Relief; 4) Chapter 7 Cases; 5) Chapter 11, Reorganization; 6) Chapter 11, Plan Development; 7) Chapter 11, Plan Confirmation; 8) Involuntary Bankruptcy; and 9) Adversary Proceedings.

Paralegals are helpful to attorneys throughout the process of guiding clients from the time of filing a bankruptcy petition through discharge and closing the case. The new course helps prepare paralegals for specific tasks from initial client interviews to drafting various petitions, judgment searches and UCC information.

The massive load of requisite motions, agreement letters, and other correspondence with debtors, creditors, lawyers, clerks, trustees, and clients is presented in logical order in easily digested modules to help make sense of the complex world of Commercial Bankruptcy.

This new offering brings the total APC program to 19 courses:

- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Business Organizations: Incorporated Entities
- Contracts Management/Contracts Administration
- Criminal Litigation
- Discovery
- Land Use
- Social Security Disability
- Trial Practice
- Trademarks
- Personal Injury and/or

Individual certifications in the following PI practice areas:

- Automobile Accidents
- Entity Medical Liability
- Individual Medical Liability
- Intentional Torts
- Premises Liability
- Product Liability
- Workers' Compensation
- Wrongful Death

For further information, visit the NALA web site (www.nala.org) Certification/Advanced Paralegal Certification. (or <http://www.nala.org/APC-comm-bankruptcy.aspx>)

COOKBOOKS - \$10.00

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CLE Calendar

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

(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 "Identity Theft and Scams on the Elderly." www.texasbarcle.com.

Check out the **Ten Minute Mentor** on 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.

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

(Online) Free Webinars and CLE on Demand sponsored by Law.Com. For a full list of available courses, go to <http://www.law.com/jsp/law/webinars.jsp>.

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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