



Key Note



Volume 97

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

January 2013

President's Message

Happy New Year!! The new year brings lots of activities and we want you to be a part of it ALL! I have numerous ideas for making 2013 not only an educational year for NTAP members, but also a FUN year! You are not going to want to miss a minute!



One thing on our calendar for this year is a BIG celebration - 2013 marks NTAP's 25th anniversary! While I haven't been a member since inception, I have been a member for over 15 years and truly believe that the networking with fellow paralegals in our community has been an invaluable help to me and especially to my career over the years. The board is dedicated to making the silver anniversary event a spectacular memory for all and is already making plans for a big celebration. This will be an event not to be missed!

I want to focus this year on encouraging our fellow paralegals in the community to not only JOIN NTAP, but to get involved. To encourage this and to start the fun and fellowship off, I propose that we have an annual bowling tournament - with a GRAND prize (to be donated) for the winner (and possibly even a prize for the WORST bowler!). Since the event will be held after work or on the weekend, everyone can relax and really socialize. I will be working to schedule the event in the near future, so watch your email and newsletters.

I also want to encourage you to utilize the invaluable opportunities and information that your NTAP membership provides - CLE at the monthly meetings, socials to promote unity, the Job Bank, our Facebook page, our website, and involvement in the legal community. WOW! So

many advantages to membership! NTAP is moving and growing, so come along and join the fun.

I urge you to turn in your renewal applications and be ready to get involved this year. I strongly believe in providing education, community involvement, and networking for the legal professional community. As your new President and fellow paralegal, I welcome the opportunity to serve you.

Sandi Clarke, CP
NTAP President, 2013

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year

2013 Executive Committee

President - Sandi Clarke, CP
1st Vice President - Andrea Brunson, CP
2nd Vice President - Cindy VanBlaricom
Secretary - Crystal Roberts
Treasurer - Shannon Qualls
NALA Liaison - Mona H. Tucker, ACP

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year

Have Your Renewed?

Membership renewals were due on January 1st, so if you haven't already sent in your form and payment, please do that right away.

The Standing Rules call for a \$5 late fee on any renewals not taken care of by January 31st.

Membership applications will be available at the January membership meeting, or can be accessed at www.NTAParalegals.org. The renewal form is also attached to this issue of the *Key Note*.

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year

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**Merry Christmas
To the Rainbow Room Kids**

NTAP members brought stuffed animals to their Christmas party on Dec. 19, and Javan Johnson used the money that had been donated to buy five car seats for the Rainbow Room.



Nancy Eldridge

Nancy Eldridge, from the Longview Rainbow Room, was on hand to receive the gifts, and expressed her appreciation. She shared a bit of information on just what the Rainbow Room is and what they try to accomplish.

Thanks to all of you who contributed to this great effort.

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year

NALA Update

For those of you who are NALA members, be sure to hang on to the \$80 coupon you will receive with your 2013 renewal certificate. It will cover the cost of any course offered on NALA Campus Live, or can be applied to the fee for one of the Advanced Certification programs.

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year

CP Review Course

Our friends at TAALP are planning a CP Review Course for April 26 and 27, so if you missed NTAP's course in the fall, here's another chance

for you to prepare for the exam. The course will be held at the Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce at 315 North Broadway. Watch the *Key Note* for details as they become available.

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year

**Northeast Texas Association of Paralegals, Inc.
Minutes of the Membership Meeting
December 16, 2012**

The minutes will be available for review at the January meeting.

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year

**Texas Supreme Court Rolls out Schedule for
Mandatory e-Filing in Civil Cases**

The Texas Supreme Court has mandated that lawyers file court documents electronically, using the state's new TexFile system, in civil cases in intermediate appellate and trial courts.

Starting in January 2014, the 14 courts of appeal and the district, county and statutory probate courts in the most populous counties will only accept e-filings from lawyers in civil cases, says the Supreme Court's Dec. 11 Order Requiring Electronic Filing in Certain Courts. For the complete text of the Order, go to <http://pdfserver.amlaw.com/tx/SupremeCourtEfilingMandate12920600.pdf>.

The order does not apply to criminal-case filings.

The mandate will become effective in the largest counties first, and other counties will follow a schedule based on population, until all counties mandate e-filing by July 2016.

Because the high court mandated e-filing, TexFile's developer and operator, Tyler Technologies Inc., will decrease fees to their lowest level of \$3.50 per transaction for e-filing and e-service. Filers must still pay a fee for an electronic filing service provider to prepare a document for e-filing.

- from the *Tex Parte Blog*

<http://www.texaslawyer.typepad.com>



Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year

January



The membership meeting will be at noon on January 16 at the Summit Club. Casey Goolsby will install our new officers and we will reveal the name of the 2012 Paralegal of the Year, so you will want to be present.

RSVP by Jan. 14 to sandi.clarke@boonlaw.com.

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year

Now We're
Cookin'



Sweet Potato Souffle

Pam Matthews

2 cups mashed sweet potatoes
1¼ cup granulated sugar
6 T. melted margarine
2 eggs (beaten)
½ cup evaporated milk
½ tsp nutmeg
½ tsp cinnamon

Topping:

½ cup brown sugar
¾ cup crushed corn flakes
½ cup chopped pecans
6 T. soft margarine

Mix ingredients together and place in a 2-quart casserole dish sprayed with Pam. Bake 20-30 minutes at 400 degrees until slightly set. Remove from oven and crumble topping over top. Return to oven for 10-15 minutes until topping is set and brown.

Helpful Hints: I always double this recipe and put it in a 2½ quart casserole dish. If you double the recipe, don't double the topping. When you

double the recipe, bake it at least 15 minutes longer at a lower temperature (375 degrees) until top is slightly set. When you mix ingredients together, use a mixer. Sweet potatoes have strings and the mixer will help remove them. I pull the strings off the beaters a couple of times during the mixing process. I used the 29 oz. can of Trappey's Sugary Sam Sweet Potatoes. It contains exactly 2 cups of mashed sweet potatoes.

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year

COOKBOOKS - \$10.00

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TEXAS BOARD OF LEGAL SPECIALIZATION

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) Transition from School to Work Place. January 17, 2013, 3:00 pm. This free webinar is for paralegal students or newly-graduated ones who are ready to begin their interviewing process. The webinar will include instruction to enhance interviewing skills and resume writing. To register, go to <http://nala.org/freeweb.aspx>.

(Online) Texas Veterans Legal Assistance Project Webinar, Mondays 11:45-1:00 p.m. The Texas Legal Services Center offers a free webinar each Monday on topics related to veterans. All courses have been approved by the State Bar for one hour of participatory credit (no ethics). For upcoming topics, go to www.tlsc.org.

(Montgomery) February 1, 2013. Paralegal Division District 10 will sponsor its 6th annual "Important Skills for Today's Paralegal" at the Walden Yacht Club. Topics include Case Investigation through Discovery, Immigration, e-Discovery, and Legal Research. Cost is \$40 for Paralegal Division members, \$55 for non-members. Contact Cheryl Bryan, cbryan@obt.com, for details and to register.

(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 "Demonstrative Evidence and Trial Presentation Technology". www.texasbarcle.com. Please note: *NALA will not accept courses under 50 minutes in length*, but the Paralegal Division does accept these 30-minute online classes.

(Online) Ethics. If you need ethics CLE hours check out www.lexvid.com. All the courses all *free*.

(Online) NALA Campus Live! has many topics to choose from, and the Texas Board of Legal Specialization has approved certain courses for certification and re-certification. The spring program begins January 26 and runs through May 10th. More information is available at www.nala.org.

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:

Andrea Brunson, CP
AndreaB@NixLawFirm.com
NTAP, P.O. Box 2284, Longview, Texas 75601

**ANNUAL DUES RENEWAL
NORTHEAST TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF PARALEGALS, INC.**

(An Affiliate of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.)

Classification:

ACTIVE	<input type="checkbox"/> Voting	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-voting	\$35.00
ASSOCIATE	<input type="checkbox"/> Voting	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-voting	\$35.00
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> Voting	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-voting	\$25.00
SUSTAINING			\$100.00

Name: _____ Home Telephone #: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: Texas Zip Code: _____

Employer: _____

Business Address: _____

City: _____ State: Texas Zip Code: _____

Business Telephone: _____ Business Facsimile: _____

Office e-mail: _____ Home e-mail: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Preferred Mailing Address: _____ Home _____ Business

Area(s) of specialization, if any: _____

NALA Member CLA/CP ACP SBOT/PD

TBLS/Specialty _____

Please list first year you became a member of NTAP _____

Optional for Directory:

Education: _____

Other Memberships: _____

NTAP Background (offices held, committees served on, etc.) _____

Spouse's Name _____ Children's Names and Ages: _____

Hobbies, Goals, and/or Other personal Information: _____

FOR SUSTAINING MEMBERS ONLY:

Check one: Attorney Law Firm Corporation School Educator

Be Completed by Applicant for ACTIVE Membership:

I hereby apply for active membership in the Northeast Texas Association of Paralegals, Inc. I hereby certify that I am a resident of the State of Texas; that I am employed as a Paralegal; and that I qualify as a member under the category or categories checked below. I hereby give consent to the Association to contact my present and/or former supervising attorney(s) for verification or clarification of my qualifications for membership.

Please check the appropriate category or categories:

_____ a. The experienced individual who (i) is presently employed as a paralegal; (ii) possesses a minimum of five (5) years of law-related experience; (iii) possesses a minimum of six (6) months paralegal experience; (iv) for whom the employer-attorney will attest to that individual's qualifications as a Paralegal; and (v) can attest that they have not been convicted or given probation (whether deferred or not) of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude or any other felony; or

_____ b. The paralegal who (i) has successfully completed the CP examination, and/or a specialty certification examination administered by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization; (ii) possesses a minimum of six (6) months paralegal experience; (iii) possess a minimum of two (2) years law-related experience; (iv) for whom the employer-attorney will attest to that individual's qualifications as a paralegal; and (v) can attest that they have not been convicted or given probation (whether deferred or not) of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude or any other felony; or

_____ c. The paralegal who (i) has successfully completed a course of study for paralegals; (ii) possesses a minimum of six (6) months paralegal experience; (iii) possess a minimum of two (2) years law-related experience; (iv) for whom the employer-attorney will attest to that individual's qualifications as a paralegal; and (v) can attest that they have not been convicted or given probation (whether deferred or not) of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude or any other felony; or

_____ d. The paralegal who fulfills the criteria for Active membership in the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas.

To Be Completed by Applicant for ASSOCIATE Membership:

I hereby apply for associate membership in the Northeast Texas Association of Paralegals, Inc. I hereby certify that I am a resident of the State of Texas; and that I qualify as a member under the category or categories checked below. I hereby give consent to the Association to contact my present and/or former supervising attorney(s) for verification or clarification of my qualifications for membership.

Please check the appropriate category or categories:

_____ a. The experienced individual who (i) is presently employed as a paralegal; (ii) possesses a minimum of five (5) years of law-related experience but does not possess the minimum six (6) months paralegal experience; (iii) for whom the employer-attorney will attest to that individuals' qualifications as a paralegal; and (vi) can attest that they have not been convicted or given probation (whether deferred or not) of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude or any other felony; or

_____ b. The paralegal who fulfills the criteria for Associate membership in the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas; or

_____ c. If you were OR are currently an ACTIVE Member and you have retired, taking a leave of absence, or changing careers you may renew as an ASSOCIATE Member without an attorney verification signature. For this category, you must enclose a letter (with your application) describing your situation.

To Be Completed by Applicant for STUDENT Membership:

I hereby apply for Student Membership in the Northeast Texas Association of Paralegals, Inc. I certify that:

_____ a. I am a student in good standing enrolled in a university, college, junior college, or other program of study for paralegals and can attest that I have not been convicted or given probation (whether deferred or not) of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude or any other felony.

Name of institution and location: _____

_____ b. The individual who (i) has completed any university, college, junior college or other program of study for paralegals; (ii) is presently employed as a paralegal, but does not possess a minimum of five (5) years of law related experience and does not possess the minimum six (6) months paralegal experience; but for whom the employer-attorney will attest to that individuals' qualifications as a paralegal; and (iii) can attest that they have not been convicted or given probation (whether deferred or not) of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude or any other felony.

To be Completed by All Applicants:

I have read the definition of a paralegal as stated below, and have read and agree to be bound by the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of the National Association of Paralegals, Inc., and agree to be bound by the Disciplinary Procedures established by the Northeast Texas Association of Paralegals, Inc. I further understand that this application is subject to approval by the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.

Date: _____ Renewing Member's Signature: _____

DEFINITION OF A PARALEGAL

A Paralegal is a person, qualified through education, training, or work experience, who is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, governmental agency, or other entity in a capacity or function which involves the performance, under the direct supervision of an attorney, of specifically delegated substantive legal work, which work, for the most part requires a sufficient knowledge of legal concepts that, absent such assistant, the attorney would perform the task.

PLEASE HAVE YOUR SUPERVISING ATTORNEY SIGN THE VERIFICATION BELOW:

(Not required for Sustaining Members)

Supervising Attorney Verification:

I have read the definition of a paralegal stated above and I hereby verify that _____ Applicant herein works under my direct supervision as a paralegal and that I remain responsible for the Applicant's work product.

Name of Supervising Attorney: _____

Attorney's Signature
State Bar Card Number: _____

Date: _____

Please return completed application and check to:
NTAP, Inc., Membership Chairperson, P. O. Box 2284, Longview, Texas 75606