

THE VERDICT

DENTON COUNTY PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER 2012

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jennifer Stout

Hey guys, now that summer is officially over and fall is upon us (even if the weather doesn't want to cooperate), changes are coming. Not only the Season, but in the DCPA; the time to prepare for the changing of the guard, as it were, is here.

We will be holding the 2013 DCPA elections during our October meeting. This being said our executive committee officers and committee chair terms for 2012 are coming to a close, with 2013 nomination deadlines upon us. The DCPA is looking for members to fill the positions of its outgoing officers and chairs. DCPA's elected incoming officers and chairs will be inaugurated during the November luncheon. This is the time to nominate that certain person who you know would enhance, grow, bring fresh ideas and benefit DCPA and its members. This is also a great opportunity for each of us to give back to DCPA by contributing our time, experience and knowledge; volunteer by joining one or more DCPA Committees.

For those members who do not know, our 2013 incoming President will be the experienced, knowledgeable, efficient and paralegal extraordinaire, Ria Sherman! Ms. Sherman has already embraced her "2013 President Elect" status by reaching out to our membership and obtaining commitments from members to serve on DCPA committees as committee chairs and members. (I told you she was extraordinary!) In addition, Ria has received some nominations for the DCPA 2013 executive committee (we need more!). The following is a list of the 2013 committee chairs:

Legal Directory: Chair: Michele George
Newsletter: Chair: Lisa Pittman
CLE: Chair: Vicki Schmidt co-chair with Rodney Bernal
Fund Raising: Chair: Michelle Beecher
Social: Chair: Christy Powell
Ad Hoc Scholarship: Chair: Georgya Rankin

Membership:

Chair: By appointment

Although Ria has had great responses to her informal request for committee chairs and members for 2013, by cultivating a lot of new faces, there are committee member seats left to fill. This is the perfect chance to contribute to DCPA by joining a committee without fear of taking on too much. It always feels good to give back, give it a try this year, and be a committee member for DCPA. The DCPA needs you! To volunteer, please contact a committee chair directly (their contact info is in the member directory at dentonparalegals.org) and let them know!

In our positions as Para-professionals we have the skills, knowledge and power to demand change, make change and to see change happen. Let us continue to develop, grow and change the DCPA for the better; volunteer your time and nominate yourself or that person you know can effectuate the required development, growth and change needed to continue DCPA's success.

Continue to learn and impress!

2012 DCPA OFFICERS

President – Jennifer Stout
President Elect – Ria Sherman
Secretary/Parliamentarian – Kim Guertler
Treasurer – Lisa Pittman
Historian – Vicki Schmidt

2012 DCPA COMMITTEES

CLE Committee -

Lisa Bowles, Chairman
Michelle James
Debbie Mitchell

Fund Raising Committee -

Jenna Earhart, Chairman
Lisa Pittman

Ria Sherman
Michele George

Legal Directory Committee -
Debbie Maldonado, Chairman
Lisa Pittman

Membership Committee -
Priscilla Brooks, Co-Chairman
Linda Lewis, Co-Chairman
Sunnie Palmer
Jennifer Harris
Michelle Beecher
Rachel Huntman

Newsletter Committee -
Lisa Pittman, Chairman
Jennifer Earhart
Wanda Woodworth
Michele George

Social Committee -
Christy Powell, Co-Chair
Pam Snively, Co-Chair
Carolyn Ganzer
Carol Pelzel

DCPA WEBSITE

Check out what's new on our website at www.dentonparalegals.org. Let us know what you think, and what you would like to see on our website in the future. If you have any changes that need to be made to your contact information, please let us know.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Blake Owens, US Legal Support, *Sustaining*
Lacee Young, Duane L. Coker & Associates, P.C., *Active*
Rodney Bernal, Duane L. Coker & Associates, P.C., *Active*

MEMBERSHIP

Please encourage those paralegals and others in the legal field, whom are not currently members, to join. If you know of anyone who would like to join, please contact Priscilla Brooks at Priscilla.brooks@dentoncounty.com, (940) 349-2758 or Linda Lewis at linda@dentonfamilyattorneys.com, (940) 591-1191.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE DENTON COUNTY PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION INCLUDE:

- ❖ Receipt of the monthly issue of *The Verdict*
- ❖ Free Accredited CLE at monthly meetings
- ❖ Continuing Legal Education seminars on various topics
- ❖ Job Bank
- ❖ Motivation
- ❖ Networking with other paralegals in Denton County
- ❖ Professional growth through participation
- ❖ Communication and promotion of professional conduct and responsibility
- ❖ Continued individual and professional growth as paralegals
- ❖ Fulfillment that is received from being involved in the direction of the paralegal profession

BIRTHDAYS!

Our members with October birthdays are:



- Michelle James (Oct 3)
- Michelle Beecher (Oct 5)
- Michael Garcia (Oct 5)
- Elizabeth Armentrout (Oct 8)
- Stephenie Taylor (Oct 8)

Rachel Huntman (Oct 15), Diana Rivera Serrano (Oct 25)
Stephanie Skipworth (Oct 26), Cole Honeisel (Oct 27)
Gloria Porter (Oct 31)

Hope each of you will have a **Happy Birthday!**

EVENTS/NEWS



Do you have a recipe, informative tip/idea, or joke, etc. that you would like to share with your fellow DCPA Members? If so, please submit your idea to Jenna Earhart at jeahart@hbwvlaw.com. Thank you!

2012 SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

Allison Martin with The Wright Firm, LLP is DCPA's 2012 TAPS Scholarship recipient. Congratulations Allison!

SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE UPDATE

Attached is a thank you letter from the Children's Advocacy Center of Denton County.

A big THANK YOU to the members that contributed monetary or school supply donations toward the Children's Advocacy Center of Denton County!

2012 TAPS UPDATE

DCPA's donation to TAPS this year went towards a special project, the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children's yearly bike rodeo, a program that promotes bicycle safety for children of all ages. See the thank you letter attached from the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas.

DCPA FUNDRAISER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Let the Silent Auction BEGIN!!

SAVE THE DATE: The DCPA Silent Auction will be October 23, 2012 from 5:30 p.m - 8:00 p.m., and will take place at the law office of Springer & Lyle, LLP located at 1807 Westminster, Denton, Texas 76205. The Auction will be in conjunction with the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas, District 12's celebration of Texas Paralegal Day. Snacks will be provided.

If you have not yet committed to donating an item and would like to, please send me an email with your commitment form so I can be sure to follow up with you.

Our first annual silent auction was a big hit with our Members, so we are gearing up for our Second Annual Silent Auction benefitting our Thanksgiving and Christmas families. This year we set in place FIVE very exciting categories to help our Members decide where their own talents might lay. Categories are as follows: Baby, Baked Goods, Gift Boxes, Photography/Art and Theme Baskets.

This is what we are looking for in each Category:

- ▶ **Baby** - Hand-made: blankets, clothes, hats, bibs, bags, etc.
- ▶ **Baked Goods** - Hand-made: pies, quiche, cookies, cakes, etc.
- ▶ **Gift Boxes Stuffed with Fun** - Birthday, Christmas, Pamper, Goodies, Crafts, Teachers, Boys, Girl, etc.
- ▶ **Photography/Art** - Hand-made: Photo session, Framed Art, Paintings, Drawings, Woodwork, etc.
- ▶ **Theme Baskets** - grab another Member or two, and create a theme basket of your choosing and create something fun. Some theme ideas include: movie, pamper, bbq, scrapbooking, Nascar, sports, cooking, games, candles, music, etc.

Remember - these items will be great for tackling early Christmas shopping, upcoming birthdays and baby showers

too. Be sure to participate during the bidding at the Auction - donations are great, bidding wars are even better!!

Our **deadline of September 17, 2012** is fast approaching, so if you have your item(s) completed, we are accepting those donations now. You may bring those items to our monthly luncheons, drop it off at Hayes, Berry, White & Vanzant, LLP at 512 W. Hickory, Suite 100, Denton, Texas or contact Jenna Earhart at (940) 387-3518 and/or jeahart@hbvwlaw.com, so we can arrange to pick it up.

THANK YOU to those who have signed up to donate an item to the Silent Auction! All proceeds will benefit our Thanksgiving and Christmas families we assist with each year so if everyone can participate, this event will be a success.

TIP OF THE MONTH

Toothpaste applied to a wet washcloth is a good ink remover, especially on walls and wallpaper. But, be careful with wallpaper. It will still work, but don't press too hard or you'll rub the wallpaper finish off, as well.

When reheating a slice of pizza, run the bottom under the faucet. The water will cause a small amount of steam in the microwave which will keep the crust from becoming hard and brittle.

Sprinkle cinnamon and cayenne pepper along house exterior to prevent ants from entering your home. Ants will not cross the line.

Dish soap and water sprayed on flowers is an excellent bug deterrent. This is particularly useful with roses, hollyhock, and daisy. It also will depend on what kind of bugs. Some aphids are resilient and will return. Japanese Beetles, also can be a deadly foe to your flowers, act quickly and drench thoroughly for several days until problem is resolved.

IN THE KNOW

By Wanda Woodworth

Talking with: Ava Watson

Employed by law firm: Springer & Lyle, LLP for 7 years

Years experience: I have 14 years of experience as a paralegal.

What made you want to become a paralegal? I resigned as Director of a Children's Ministry at my church after sixteen years. After a short break, I wanted to pursue something different. I interviewed for an administrative/back-up legal

assistant position at a law firm with four attorneys. I learned the profession from the ground up. The more I learned the more responsibility they gave me. Within the year, I was doing fulltime legal work. I don't like to be bored and the legal profession is never boring so it has been a great fit for me.

What type of law does your firm practice? Personal Injury, Business Litigation, Probate & Wills, Real Estate, Contracts, and Guardian Ad Litem work (assigned by the courts).

What was it like being a new paralegal? It was scary – I was in unexplored territory, and I was older (early 40's). Being a new paralegal was something new, exciting, nerve wracking and challenging all at once.

How many paralegals are at your current firm: There are actually two Paralegals, however, the other one functions as the office manager/financial person rather than in the capacity of Paralegal. I support one of the partners, and one associate who is a seven year attorney. The other partner in our firm has a 2nd year attorney who does his paralegal tasks as well as her attorney duties, with the assistance of a Legal Assistant in training, whose goal is to attend law school.

What is your advice to new paralegals? Be ready to help with any project and accept all opportunities to learn something new. Be a team player and strive to achieve a high work ethic. Establish good relationships with your clients. Be yourself; they warm up faster to a genuine approach and it helps establish trust.

To which paralegal organizations do you belong? DCPA, State Bar of Texas Paralegal Association. (I am presently the sub-chair for the SBTPA election committee.)

How do you relax after a tough day at work? I enjoy the occasional glass of wine and visiting with friends. I like relaxing in the hot tub and pool. Writing is a passion – I am journaling childhood memories for my 5 year-old granddaughter and I write poetry.

each. If you have an old directory, turn it in for a \$2.00 rebate on the purchase price. See attached Order Form. This is a great resource! Get yours today! For more information contact Lisa Pittman at (940) 387-3518 or lpittman@hbwvlaw.com.



SUPPORT OUR SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Our Sustaining Members give so much to our Association, please be sure to think of them when you are in need of services that require their

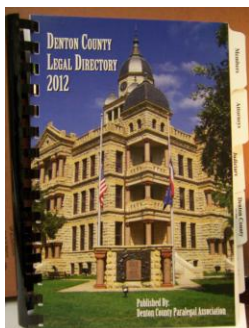
Jay Freeman @ Accurate Concept Insurance
 Dana Miller @ Zenith Investigations
 Cheryl Perlich @ The Reporting Professionals
 Bruce Stewart @ Stewart Process Service Inc
 Janel Stoffels @ Stoffels & Associates Inc.
 Blake Owens @ US Legal Support

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

If you have an open position in your office or know of another office that has an opening and would like to e-mail it to the members and have it posted in the next newsletter, please contact Lisa Pittman at (940) 387-3518 or lpittman@hbwvlaw.com.

AUGUST MINUTES

1. President Stout called the meeting of August 23, 2012, to order at 12:04 p.m. at the Oakmont Country Club. There were 30 in attendance, which included 26 members, three guests and the speaker, all of whom were welcomed by the President.
2. President Stout asked for a vote of approval of the June minutes. A motion for approval was presented by Michelle George and seconded Wanda Woodworth, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.
3. President Stout asked for approval of the Treasurer's Report. A motion for approval was presented by Michelle George and seconded by Georgya Rankin, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.
4. Under new business, Lisa Bowles discussed the ½ day seminar and reminded members that the deadline to register is September 15, 2012. Christy Powell reported on the DCPA Social event, "Save our



Members, please get your 2012 Legal Directory if you haven't already picked it up! This latest directory has been updated to include some of the newest attorneys in Denton County. The cost of the directory is \$25.00

Sanity” that will be held on September 13, 2012 at The Pourhouse Sports Grill.

5. The speaker, Bryan Rice, presented information on “Business Evaluations, Tracing and Characterization.”
6. Season Gaylor won the door prize which was a \$25.00 DSW gift card donated by Joseph E. Zellmer.
7. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.