

The Verdict

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Denton County Paralegal Association

PARALEGAL DAY



H.R. No. 865

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, To honor the contributions of the paralegal community, the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas is hosting a day at the State Capitol on April 15, 2005, for members of the Texas Alliance of Paralegal Associations, and it is a pleasure to welcome them in anticipation of Texas Paralegal Day on October 23, 2005; and

WHEREAS, The Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas was created on October 23, 1981, and it continues to foster high standards of conduct, professional ethics, and responsible practices through legal education programs and its cooperation with the state bar; it is committed to achieving more economical and improved legal services throughout the state by focusing on benefits to its members and the paralegal profession and developing opportunities, incentives, and recognition for legal education; and

WHEREAS, The division's members are diversely employed by law firms, public and private corporations, businesses, institutions, and local, state, and federal government agencies; paralegals work under the direction of an attorney and require sufficient knowledge of legal concepts to perform work that would otherwise be completed by an attorney; and


WHEREAS, The Lone Star State's paralegal community is a tremendous asset to the functioning of our judicial system, and its members make substantial contributions to the quality and proficiency of legal services throughout the state; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas Legislature hereby recognize October 23, 2005, as Texas Paralegal Day and extend to all those visiting the Capitol today sincere best wishes for a pleasant stay.



 Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 865 was adopted by the House on April 7, 2005, by a non-record vote.



 Chief Clerk of the House



Meeting Notice

2014 Officers

Kim Guertler, President
Kim.guertler@dentoncounty.com

Cheryl Cooper, President-Elect
mlj@steelelawfirm.com

Melody Brackeen, Secretary/Parliamentarian
mbrackeen@dentontexaslawyers.com

Lisa Pittman, Treasurer
lpittman@hbwwlaw.com

Sunnie Palmer, Historian
sunnie@zellmerlaw.com

The Denton County Paralegal Association's next Luncheon will be on Thursday, **October 23, 2014** at noon at Oakmont Country Club, 1901 Oakmont Drive, Corinth, Texas.

The all-inclusive cost of lunch is \$14.00 payable when you sign in. We cannot accept debit or credit cards, or make change, so please bring **exact** amount of cash or a check made payable to DCPA.

Did you know...

Payments for the CLE Luncheon can now be made online. For more information and online registration see Events/CLE Luncheon at www.dentonparalegals.org.

RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED and can be made via e-mail to kim.guertler@dentoncounty.com. The deadline to RSVP is October 20, 2014.

Notice: We must notify Oakmont of the number attending prior to the meeting for preparation of adequate food and seating arrangements. Those that have RSVP'd will get served and seated first. We cannot guarantee that you will have seating or food if you do not RSVP. Please note we are also required to bill those individuals who make reservations and do not attend.

Directions to Oakmont

Oakmont Country Club is located in Corinth off I-35 East between Lewisville and Denton.

- Exit 461 – Shady Grove Road/Post Oak Drive
- Turn west onto Post Oak Drive
- Turn right (west) onto Robinson Road at stop sign
- Turn left (south) onto Oakmont Drive – you will see an Oakmont sign in the median
- Turn right into Oakmont Country Club (second right)

2014 Committee Chairs

CLE, Michelle Beecher
mbeecher@dentonlaw.com

Fundraising, Jennifer Stout
jennifer.stout@dentoncounty.com

Legal Directory, Brandi Hunter
BHunter410@gmail.com

Membership, Gina Elliot
gottigina@yahoo.com

Newsletter, Lisa Pittman
lpittman@hbwwlaw.com

Social, Priscilla Brooks
priscilla.brooks@dentoncounty.com

TAPA, Jennifer Stout
jennifer.stout@dentoncounty.com

Ad Hoc Scholarship,
Wanda Woodworth
wandawoodworth@dentoncounty.com

AGENDA FOR OCTOBER MEETING

Date: October 23, 2014
Place: Oakmont Country Club
1901 Oakmont Drive
Corinth, Texas 76210
Time: Noon

- 1. Welcome members and guests**
- 2. Old Business**
 - a. Approve September, 2014, Treasurer's Report
 - b. Approve September, 2014, meeting Minutes
- 3. New Business**
 - a. Officer Elections
 - b. Quarterly Committee Reports
 - c. Upcoming Events
- 4. Door Prize and Announcements**
- 5. Adjournment**



President's Message

By: Kim Guertler

Hello everyone! Please plan to attend our luncheon next Thursday, October 23rd. It is an important meeting because we elect our 2015 Officers at that time. At this time, Lisa Pittman has submitted her name for the Office of Treasurer, Melody Brackeen has submitted her name for the Office of President-Elect and Pam Snavelly has submitted her name for the Office of Secretary. If you would like your name on the ballot for one of these offices, please email Gina Elliott at gottigina@yahoo.com or Sunnie Palmer at sunnie@zelmerlaw.com.

October 23rd is an important date for us all for another reason too – it is Texas Paralegal Day. The State Bar of Texas was the first bar association in the United States to create a separate division for paralegals. [The Paralegal Division](#) (formerly known as the Legal Assistants Division) of the State Bar of Texas (the "Division") was created on October 23, 1981. To recognize this day of creation and the paralegals in the State of Texas, the Division approached the Texas Legislature in 2005 to promote the adoption of Texas Paralegal Day. On April 15, 2005, Texas House Resolution No. 865 was signed by the Speaker of the House, Representative Tom Craddick, commending the Division, the paralegals of the State of Texas and resolving that the 79th Legislature of the State of Texas had declared October 23rd as Texas Paralegal Day. This date was chosen because that is the day PD (formerly LAD) was created by the State Bar of Texas in 1981. Paralegals across the State celebrate this day in honor of our profession. What a great honor it is to be a part of such a respected profession and what better way to celebrate than to have lunch with your peers!

I have received a great response for the Paws for Cause 5K and Concert on November 15th. I think it will be a fun event and I am excited that so many of you think so too! If you are interested in attending, just click on the link that was included in my email to you and register. If you need for me to resend the email, just let me know. For those of you who have not received your DCPA t-shirts yet, we will have them at the luncheon for you to pick up. If you are not going to attend the luncheon, email me that you still need your shirt and I will bring them to the event on the 15th.

Hope everyone has a safe and fun Halloween! See you all Thursday!

Birthdays

Our members with November Birthdays are:

Rodney Bernal (11/14)
Beth Honeycutt (11/5)
Pamela Snavely (11/22)
Amanda Silva (11/7)

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

Membership News

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 Gina Gotti at gottigina@yahoo.com.

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

IN THE KNOW

Talking with: Gina Silva

Employed by: Koons Fuller P.C.

Years' experience: 10 years

What made you want to become a paralegal? Ever since I was little I was intrigued with the court shows – Matlock then, later, People’s Court. At first I wanted to become a lawyer so decided to study to be a Paralegal to figure if I liked it I could go to Law School. Ultimately, I decided to stay a paralegal.

What type of law did your atty practice? Commercial Real Estate Law, Corporate Bankruptcy and Family Law.

What was it like being a new paralegal? It was overwhelming at first: learning the attorney’s style and how they liked the documents done. The attorneys I have worked for trained me to pay attention to every detail.

How many paralegals are at your current firm? There are 6 paralegals in our Denton office and another 23 paralegals in our other four offices: Dallas, South Lake, Plano and Houston. We have approximately 30 attorneys between the five offices.

What kind of law is practiced at your current firm? All Family Law

What is your advice to new paralegals? Pay attention to details and ask questions to make you are doing tasks correctly. Use all your resources. Many firms will have accounts to numerous resources such as the Texas Secretary of State. Another resource I use is Texas Land Records.

To which paralegal organizations do you belong? DCPA. My current firm actually encouraged me to join.

How do you relax after a tough day at work? I watch a few favorite shows where I don’t have to think. I like The Voice, cooking shows and DIY shows.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, October 25, 2014

The Denton County Bar Association is holding a Chili Cookoff. See attached flyers for more details.

Saturday, November 15, 2104: Paws for Cause 5K

Let's have a strong DCPA showing at the Paws for a Cause 5K and Concert benefiting the Denton Humane Society and Mazie's Mission. If you are interested in participating, please contact Kim Guertler at kim.guertler@dentoncounty.com.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month



Breast Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM), also referred to as **National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM)**, is an annual international health campaign organized by major breast cancer charities every October to increase awareness of the disease and to raise funds for research into its cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure. The campaign also offers information and support to those affected by breast cancer. Please encourage the women in your lives (including yourself) to have a mammogram and/or ultrasound for early detection.

Are You Qualified?

In the spirit of Paralegal Day.....

This is a real ad that was posted.

Immediate Opening (Georgetown)

Compensation: Varies based on experience and qualifications.

LEGAL ASSISTANT/RECEPTIONIST/OFFICE MANAGER

Two busy Georgetown attorneys need a qualified assistant that is an excellent receptionist, a top notch office administrator, a proficient typist, with the ability to learn new software programs, handle client billing, assist with advertising and marketing, make coffee, order lunches, pick up laundry, run errands, fax, scan, file, organize, order supplies, work with the CPA, pay taxes, pay bills, balance office bank accounts (and our personal accounts), and handle a wide variety of other issues. You must be able to multitask while handling two calls at once, typing a memo, opening the mail, and filing correspondence. You must be able to draft pleadings, or learn how real soon. You must be able to convince potential clients that we are the very best, that they should make an appointment to come in as soon as possible to get our help before it is too late, bring cash or a credit card, or wait for one of us to call them back before they call the next attorney they can find a phone number for. You must be a fast learner, or better yet, figure it out for yourself. You must have excellent organizational skills, be extremely detail oriented, and have an excellent memory. Don't ask too many questions, and never ask the same question twice. You must be able to remember that we are always right, and if we are not right, it is your responsibility to convince us to change our minds all the while making it seem like it was our idea to do it different in the first place. You must make all of our clients love us and you too. If a client is mad, it is because you messed up, and it is your responsibility to make sure they understand that and that they never think either of us ever makes a mistake.

We practice mainly criminal law and family law so not one single person is happy to see us. They are in the worst mess of their lives, they don't have any money, and we have to fix everything, make all of the community bills be the other spouse's responsibility, keep the other parent from seeing the kids, and if they get to see them, it must be strictly supervised. We have to get them everything they want, including the house, the best car, or better yet, all the cars, all the furniture, all the bank accounts, the 401K, the boat, the waverunner, and the lawnmower. They should not have to be responsible for any of their bills, and the other spouse should be made to pay all of the bills. We are expected to do this for free because they have been so wronged by their spouse, or at least make their spouse pay for all of their legal fees while we work for nothing counting on that to happen. If the court does not make the other spouse pay all the legal fees, it is because we failed in our job and we should just be glad they don't sue us, and if we don't just forget about the bill, they might just do that.

When they are charged with a crime, we are expected to make the state drop the charges, change the law as it applies to them, convince a jury that the video does not depict a drunk person, and if it does, it isn't them just someone that looks like them. If they stole something, it was really their's in the first place, they forgot to go through the checkout register, they were overcharged the last time they were in that store and this was just to balance everything out. If they assaulted their spouse, it was only because they had it coming, the other person started it, or they really just fell down and got two black eyes, a bloody nose, multiple contusions to the head, face, neck and upper body, back arms, and legs. If they ran from the police down I-35 at 100 miles per hour until the police finally shot their tires out in Waco, it was because they did not see the red lights, they thought they were clearing the way for an ambulance or a firetruck, they had an emergency of their own but because of all the stress and shooting they can't remember exactly what it was, or they thought the police were going to kill them because they had been set up because they had not done anything wrong, and to top all this off, the

police did not smell alcohol on them, they planted the empty beer cans, and the blood test was a sham. You will need to understand exactly how all of this could happen to a perfectly innocent person. You must know that all of the police officers are liars and they all get together to get their story straight before they come to court. You have to be sympathetic and understanding.

You must be able to get them to pay their account, or better yet, pay everything up front, and make them happy to do that. If they don't pay, we don't get paid. You must be a take charge person that can keep up with two busy and established attorneys that both need separate calendars managed, independent case loads managed, and separate client lists maintained. You must be able to communicate with established clients, new or prospective clients, court staff, other attorneys, other office staff, salespeople, bill collectors, and the two of us. You must keep all of this straight and know which one of us represent which client. The pay is low and the only benefit is getting the pleasure of working with the two of us. Everyone (especially us) must be kept happy. That's your job.

Only serious candidates need apply. Please don't waste our time if you are not serious, we don't have a lot of spare time, and we don't want to waste it on applications from those of you that are not serious or qualified or determined if you don't meet all the qualifications.

Mostly, you will be required to work in the office, but your schedule can be somewhat flexible on an as needed basis, but you will need to be computer literate. We have offsite access programs, file sharing and cloud storage programs that allow you to access work from alternate locations if you have your own computer or laptop. We are easy to get along with, and there is never a dull moment.

(1) A resume, (2) references, (3) and salary or hourly rate request is necessary for your application to be considered. Please attach a current photo ID (a valid driver license photo will do just fine), and understand what you are getting into before applying.

Please reply to Craigslist.....



Support Our Sustaining Members

Please help support our Sustaining Members by calling them when you have a project that needs outside support. Remember it is through their continued support and generosity that DCPA is able to provide social events at a low cost.

Stewart Process Service, Inc.

Bruce G. Stewart

110 Sheraton Place
Denton, Texas 76209
Phone: 940-367-4643
Fax: 940-484-0999
Email – stewartprocess@verizon.net

The Reporting Professionals

Cheryl K. Perlich

2925 Country Club Road, Suite 104
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Phone: 940-484-6053
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Email – reportingpros@sbcglobal.net

Stoffels & Associates, Inc.

Janel M. Stoffels

207 W. Hickory St., Ste. 304
Denton, Texas 76201
Phone: 940-565-9797
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Email – jmstoffels@aol.com



Minutes

1. President Kim Guertler called the meeting of September, 2014, to order at 12:05 p. m. at the Oakmont Country Club. There were 25 attendees (22 members, 2 guests, and 1 guest speaker). President Guertler welcomed guests.

OLD BUSINESS:

2. President Guertler asked for a vote on the August, 2014 meeting minutes. A motion for approval was presented by Sunnie Palmer and seconded by Christy Powell. The motion carried by unanimous vote.
3. President Guertler asked for a vote of approval of the August, 2014, Treasurer's report. A motion for approval was presented by Michelle Beecher and seconded by Carolyn Ganzer. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

4. Gina Gotti announced that she had three letters of intention for office; Melody Brackeen for President-Elect, Sunnie Palmer for Secretary-Parliamentarian and Lisa Pittman for Treasurer. She asked that anyone interested in running please email her.
5. Kim Guertler reminded everyone that next month's meeting is elections and quarterly reports are due from all committee chairs. The TAPA convention is October 3rd in Austin if anyone is interested in attending. Kim also reminded that she would like the group to participate in a 5K or fun run. There is a Jack-O-Lantern run coming up that she is participating in if anyone is interested in joining her.
6. Michelle Beecher introduced the guest speaker, Scott Alagood. Scott's topic of discussion was Receivership. Upon completion of his presentation Michelle awarded him with a trophy.
7. President Guertler awarded the door prize won by drawing to Gina Gotti.
8. Meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m. by President Guertler.

**Denton County
Paralegals Association**

PO Box 2641
Denton, TX 76206

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Denton-County-Paralegal-
Association](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Denton-County-Paralegal-Association)

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.dentonparalegals.org