



Ab Initio

Summer 2016
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The official newsletter of the
Legal Assistants/Paralegals of Southern West Virginia
an Affiliate of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.

In This Issue:

From Your President.....	1
2016-2017 Executive Committee.....	3
2016-2017 Standing & Special Committees.....	3
Current Membership Statistics.....	3
Welcome to LAPSWV Student Members.....	4
Update On 12th Annual Seminar and Meeting.....	5
NALA In Vegas.....	8
Upcoming Events & CLE.....	11
LAPSWV Member Birthdays.....	11
NALA Campus Live.....	11
Paralegals in the Spotlight.....	12
LAPSWV Word Match.....	13
Thank You • Our Sponsors.....	14
About LAPSWV.....	15



From Your President

“I’m a Paralegal... What’s Your Super Power?”

I recently sat down and read the Proclamation that Governor Earl Ray Tomblin signed proclaiming June 6-10, 2016 as “Legal Assistant and Paralegal Recognition Week”. My first read of this document made me smile and think how nice that was of our Governor to make this Proclamation. But then, I began dissecting it and really thought about all that we do as professionals in the legal world. Wow! It was then that I was really filled with such a sense of pride and accomplishment. What **you** do every day in the legal world really does **matter!** (Alright, I am not so naïve that I don’t realize that this is a demanding and, at times, very frustrating job!) But the glass is ALWAYS half full for me. So, let’s just focus on these words that can be found within the body of the Proclamation:

Skilled...Essential...Valuable...Experienced...Quality...Competent...
Knowledgeable ...Ethical...Professional... Commitment... Dedication

Now focus on the fact that the words above are about **YOU!**

LAPSWV strives for each of its members to develop personal and professional growth through educational opportunities and networking with other paralegals and legal professionals. I encourage each of you to stay active and involved in LAPSWV and our community. Together we can make a difference and promote LAPSWV and this profession that we have chosen as our careers. I look forward to seeing each of you at the Lunch & Learns, quarterly meetings, and other social gatherings that LAPSWV has planned for the 2016-2017 year!

Sherri L. Rasmussen
President

WANTED

LAPSWV

**IS SEEKING CP's, CLA's AND ACP's
TO ASSIST WITH A STUDY GROUP
FOR MEMBERS THAT ARE INTERESTED
IN TAKING THE CLA EXAM.**

**THE HOPE IS THAT
MEMBERS THAT ARE ALREADY CERTIFIED
WOULD LEAD A STUDY GROUP
ON A DIFFERENT AREA OF THE EXAM
TO GUIDE AND PREPARE THOSE INTERESTED
IN TAKING THE EXAMINATION.**

REWARD

**PLEASE CONTACT
SHERRI RASMUSSEN**

president@lapswv.org

OR RHONDA SWARTZ

firstvicepresident@lapswv.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION



2016-2017 LAPSWV Executive Committee



Sherri L. Rasmussen
President
The Masters Law Firm, LC
president@lapswv.org



Rhonda Swartz, ACP
First Vice President
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Mica Spratt
Second Vice President
Lamp Bartram Levy Trautwein & Perry, PLLC
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Kelly Mullins
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nalalialiaison@lapswv.org



Tammy Welch, ACP
Parliamentarian/Historian
West Virginia Mutual
Insurance Company
parliamentarian@lapswv.org

2016-2017 LAPSWV Standing and Special Committees

<p><u>Bylaw Review</u> Tammy Welch, ACP—Chair Rhonda Swartz, ACP Donna Hughes Walter Ice Melanie Hicks, CP</p> <p><u>CLA Study Group</u> Rhonda Swartz, ACP—Chair Debbie Estep Kelly Mullins Krista Scott Walter Ice Melanie Hicks, CP</p> <p><u>Community Service</u> Linda Quillen Tonya Taylor Susan Knight Jill Francisco, ACP Jennifer Honaker</p>
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<p><u>Educational</u> Rhonda Swartz, ACP—Chair Donna Donathan Tonya Taylor Melanie Hicks, CP Kristi Smith</p> <p><u>Ethics</u> Tammy Welch, ACP—Chair Melanie Hicks, CP Sherri Rasmussen</p> <p><u>Finance</u> Kelly Mullins—Chair Linda Quillen Walter Ice</p> <p><u>Fund-Raising</u> Kelly Mullins—Chair Linda Quillen</p>
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<p><u>Legislative/Regulatory</u> Melanie Hicks, CP—Chair Rhonda Swartz, ACP Tammy Welch, ACP</p> <p><u>Membership</u> Mica Spratt—Chair Linda Quillen Rhonda Swartz, ACP Tonya Taylor Jennifer Bailey Renee Clay, ACP Donna Hughes Cindy Spreacker Loretta Walker, ACP Kristi Smith</p> <p><u>Newsletter</u> Patricia Schoolcraft Tonya Taylor Michael Edwards Paula Pauley Jill Francisco, ACP</p>
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<p><u>Public Relations</u> Tonya Taylor Jennifer Honaker</p> <p><u>Seminar Planning</u> Debbie Estep Linda Quillen Rhonda Swartz, ACP Jennifer Bailey Renee Clay, ACP Cindy Spreacker Walter Ice Jill Francisco, ACP</p> <p><u>Standing Rules</u> Tammy Welch, ACP—Chair Linda Quillen Rhonda Swartz, ACP Donna Hughes Walter Ice Melanie Hicks, CP</p>
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<p><u>Website</u> Melanie Hicks, CP—Chair Pat Schoolcraft, CLA Rhonda Swartz, ACP Tonya Taylor Loretta Walker Jill Francisco, ACP</p> <p><u>Meet & Greet</u> Renee Clay, ACP (H) Cindy Spreacker (H)</p>
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LAPSWV is Always Seeking Volunteers for the Standing and Special Committees

Just Contact Any Member of the Executive Committee to Volunteer!



CURRENT MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS	
Active Members:	39
Sustaining Members:	4
Student Members:	16
Provisional Members:	1
TOTAL:	60
Pending Renewals:	0
Pending Student Applications:	0
ACPs:	4
CLAs and CPs:	7

Welcome

LAPSWV

Student Members



Amanda Farley (VP, LAPSWV Student Chapter)

Samantha White (President, LAPSWV Student Chapter)

Dalley Maynard • Mollie Withrow • Tamara Vandergriff • Samantha White • Lisa DiEsposito

Elisabeth Lukacs • Sara Hardman • Anthony Blessent

Breana Turley • Amanda Stanley • Sandra Bowles



Donna Donathan (Sustaining Member)



Katelyn Dunlap • Angela Layne • Howard Lilly



UPDATE on 12th Annual Seminar and Meeting

Patricia Schoolcraft, ACP

It is hard to believe that twelve years has passed since the formation of LAPSWV. I am so proud to have been a member since its inception and have confidence of its continued success and service to its membership.



On June 10, 2016, LAPSWV held its 12th Annual Seminar and Meeting at the Holiday Inn and Suites, Barboursville, West Virginia. The Seminar started at 8:30 a.m. with outstanding presentations from Don O'Dell, Esquire, O'Dell Law/Mediation, PLLC; Susan Lanham, Ph.D., Lanham Economics; Joel Aaron Wright, Realtime Reports; John Huff, Esquire, Jackson Kelly, PLLC; Curtis Wilkerson, Orion Strategies; and Dean Boerger, Boerger Investigative Services, LLC.



During the lunch break, LAPSWV held its 12th Annual Business Meeting. The meeting was called to order at 12:53 p.m. by President Melanie Hicks, ACP. The Minutes of the 11th annual meeting was presented and read. With the exception of three typographical corrections, the minutes were sent to the membership for approval. Sherri Rasmussen made a motion to approve the Minutes, with the corrections, and Jill Francisco, ACP, seconded the motion. There were no objections from the membership and the minutes were approved.

Last came the election of the officers for 2016/2017. Loretta Walker, ACP, Chair of the Nomination Committee, presented the slate of officers to the membership. Ms. Walker advised that Sherri Rasmussen had been nominated as the candidate for the office of President. Ms. Walker made a floor call and no other nominations were made from the floor. Ms. Walker presented Ms. Rasmussen to the membership and called for a vote on the candidate. Ms. Rasmussen was elected as President of LAPSWV for 2016/2017. Ms. Walker then advised that the Nomination Committee did not receive any nominations for the office of First Vice-President. She made a floor call and Melanie Hicks, ACP, nominated Rhonda Swartz, ACP, for the position of First Vice-President. No other nominations were received from the floor and Ms. Walker presented Ms. Swartz to the membership as the candidate for First Vice-President and called for a vote on the candidate. Ms. Swartz was elected as the First Vice-President of LAPSWV. Ms. Walker then announced that Mica Spratt had been nominated as the candidate for Second Vice-President. Ms. Walker made a call to the floor for any additional nominations for Second Vice-President. There being no nominations from the floor, Ms. Walker presented Ms. Spratt as the candidate for Second Vice-President to the membership and called for a vote for the candidate. Ms. Spratt was elected as Second Vice-President. Ms. Walker then advised that the Nomination Committee did not receive any nominations for the Treasurer and made a call for floor nominations. Sherri Rasmussen nominated Kelly Mullins for Treasurer. There being no other floor nominations, Ms. Walker presented Ms. Mullins to the membership as the candidate for Treasurer and called for a vote for the candidate. Ms. Mullins was elected as Treasurer by the membership. Ms. Walker then advised that Donna Hughes had been nominated as the candidate for Secretary. Ms. Walker made a call to the floor for other nominations. There being no nominations from the floor Ms. Walker presented Ms. Hughes as the candidate for Secretary and called for vote for the candidate. Ms. Hughes was elected as the Secretary for LAPSWV. Ms. Walker then advised that Melanie Hicks, ACP, had been nominated for NALA liaison. Ms. Walker made a call to the floor for nominations for NALA Liaison. There being no nominations from the floor, Ms. Walker presented Ms. Hicks as the candidate for NALA Liaison and called for a vote on the candidate. Ms. Hicks was elected as NALA Liaison.



Jill Francisco, ACP, served as the representative from NALA and officiated over the installation of the officers for LAPSWV for 2016/2017. Sherri Rasmussen was affirmed as President; Rhonda Swartz, ACP, was affirmed as First Vice-President; Mica Spratt was affirmed as Second Vice-President; Kelly Mullins was affirmed as Treasurer; Donna Hughes was affirmed as Secretary; and Melanie Hicks was affirmed as NALA Liaison for LAPSWV for the 2016/2017 fiscal year.

The 12th Annual Meeting closed at 1:30 p.m. with a motion from Loretta Walker, ACP to end the meeting. Patricia Schoolcraft, CLA, seconded the motion. There being no objections from the floor, the meeting ended.

Reflections of LAPSWV's 12th Annual Seminar & Meeting





NALA In Vegas

By Melanie Hicks, CP

What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas! We have all heard and adapted this saying to be applicable to different adventures in our lives. However, I have to share what happens at a NALA Convention in Vegas! Each day began with a morning yoga stretch to jump start a day of education. The first day kicked off the excitement with keynote speaker, Honorable Judge Jackie Glass (Ret.). Judge Glass retired was a litigating attorney in Las Vegas until being elected to Nevada's Eighth Judicial Circuit Court in 2002. She was the presiding Judge in the armed robbery and kidnapping charges against O. J. Simpson in 2008. Judge Glass then retired from the bench and replaced Nancy Grace on the television series "Swift Justice". Her experiences in the courtroom have been extraordinary and she shared many of those experiences with us.



The educational opportunities at this convention were structured differently than in past years. Attendees could choose from different topics by session instead of choosing one tract for the entirety of the convention. The session topics included: Sports Litigation, Legal Aspects of a Feature Film, Technology and Ethics, Essential Skills, Intellectual Property Crimes and many more. The options allow each attendee to learn about areas of the legal field they work in or explore new areas of the legal field. One of the best educational opportunities is to

attend sessions in the Essential Skills tract taught by Virginia Koerselman. Mrs. Koerselman is the author of the NALA Certified Paralegal Study Guide. This is a great opportunity for anyone who is preparing for the certifying exam!



The All Conference Luncheon is always a great event to attend. The food was great this year! Each year NALA chooses a charitable organization to support by collecting donations during the convention. The organization chosen this year was Three Square. During the All Conference Luncheon, representatives of Three Square spoke to attendees about their organization's mission "to provide wholesome food to hungry people, while passionately pursuing a hunger-free community". NALA conference attendees donated \$4,354 for the organization which will provide 13,062 meals to hungry people.

There are always great vendors to meet at the convention. It is a great source of contacts for services you may need in your area of the legal field. How great is it when an attorney says I need to find a court reporting service for depositions in California – and you have contact information for a national court reporting service? Perks of going to NALA convention! Affiliated Associations also set up booths to promote their organizations. Seeing what other organizations are doing successfully provides new ideas for our local organization. There are always great give-away items too!

NALA has leadership program called LEAP in which participants commit to a year-long program to learn how to become better leaders in their career, organizations and personal life. I participated in the program several years ago and am now a mentor for LEAP as part of the Professional Development Committee. This year the "LEAPsters" presented individual projects that were displayed for attendees to view. It was a lot of fun to see each project and hear about each person's experience. I encourage everyone to explore the opportunities available through LEAP and other NALA programs!



All the great opportunities are enhanced by the comradery and friendship found with other paralegals at NALA conventions. I got to meet a paralegal who works with the Native American Tribal Counsel which I learned is a separate legal system with very specific jurisdiction. I spent time with paralegals from Maryland, Alabama, Tennessee, Michigan and Oklahoma. Although there are some things that will stay in Vegas the experience of the NALA convention stays with you throughout all you do. Mark your calendars now for the 2017 NALA Convention & Expo in Orlando, Florida on July 19th thru 21st!



Wishing LAPSWV Members A
Happy Birthday

July Birthdays

Nicole Dingess
Michael Edwards
Patricia Schoolcraft
Evie Cooper
Molly Withrow

August Birthdays

Howard Lilly
Walter Ice
Lisa DiEsposito

September Birthdays

Donna Cramer
V. Jane Lambert
Lisa A. Lucas
Anna M. O'Neil
Krista J. Scott
Angela S. Layne (New Student)
Sandra Bowles (New Student)

Upcoming Events & CLE

Charleston Lunch & Learn Meeting

September 28, 2016—Noon-1:00 pm

Speaker: John McGhee, Kay Casto & Chaney

Topic: Interviews of Witnesses, and Preparing and Answering Discovery

Location: **Masters Law Firm**, 1C, 181 Summers Street, Charleston, WV

Lunch Provided

RSVP to Sherri Rasmussen

sherri@themasterslawfirm.com

on or before September 26, 2016



August 2016 • Upcoming Webinars

Mapping the Video Divide
August 24, 2016—12:00 pm

Proper Utilization of Paralegals
August 26, 2016—1:00 pm

Enhancing Your Trial Presentation
August 30, 2016—12:00 pm

The Paralegal's Professional Responsibilities
August 31, 2016—12:00 pm

September 2016 • Upcoming Webinars

Estate Planning in Action
September 1, 2016—10:00 am

Available Self-Study Courses

Alternate Dispute Resolution—Advanced

Alternative Dispute Resolution—Basic

American Legal System

Business Organizations: Incorporated Entities

Business Organizations: Noncorporate Entities

Available On-Demand Webinars

ABC's of Family Law

Advanced Ethics

An Analysis of Construction Defect Claims

Are Your Sabotaging Your Annual Performance Review

Art and Science of Witness Interviews

Bankruptcy—The Creditor's Perspective

Bankruptcy Basics
Basic Business Organizations
Basic Ethics: Part 1
Basic Ethics: Part 2
Basic Torts
Blue Book Review of Citing
Clean Water Act 1
Clean Water Act 2
Collection Law From A to Z
Commercial Real Estate Closings
Contracts: An Overview
Criminal Law: what You Say on Facebook May Hurt You
Crowd Funding & Other Topics
Deciphering the Medical Record-Basic
Deciphering the Medical Record Intermediate
Discovering the Potential for Social Media in Discovery
Discovery
Electronic Discovery: Best Practices for Small to Midsize Firms and Companies
Estates and Probate
Ethical Use of Paralegals
Ethics and Technology
Fact Investigation and Analysis
Family Law: Learning How Not to Do It Like The Celebrities
Federal Rules of Civil Procedure
Fourth Amendment—the Law of Search & Seizure
Governmental Contracts
Hitchhiker's Guide to US Immigration







Many Additional On-Demand Webinars Available...

View the full NALA Campus LIVE! Schedule at <http://www.nala.org>



LAPSWV

Paralegals In The Spotlight

				
				
Anna O'Neil, CP Jackson Kelly, PLLC	Michael Edwards Steptoe & Johnson PLLC	Loretta Walker, ACP Kay Casto & Chaney, PLLC	Patricia Schoolcraft, ACP Preston & Salango, PLLC	Cynthia J. Sprecker Steptoe & Johnson PLLC

Working in the legal field, many times you are given the opportunity to work with and encounter intelligent, industrious, and creative individuals who serve to go above and beyond to help others. These individuals offer up their own unique attributes and characteristics in the work environment. The above LAPSWV members are being spotlighted and recognized by their associates and co-workers for their positive attitude and contributions, among other outstanding qualities possessed.

(Should you wish to spotlight a LAPSWV member who is a co-worker or associate, please forward your request to editor.lapswv.org)

LAPSWV Word Match



Match the word on the left with the correct definition on the right.

1. Ab initio

2. Bona fide

3. Compulsa

4. Fetters

5. Gratis dictum

6. In statu quo

7. Litera

8. Non compos mentis

9. Quash

10. Testimonio

11. Verus

- A. To overthrow. To abate. To vacate. To Annul. To make void.
- B. True. Truthful. Genuine. Actual. Real. Just.
- C. A voluntary assertion. A statement which a party is not legally bound to make or in which he is not held to precise accuracy.
- D. From the beginning. From the inception.
- E. The letter of the law, as distinguished from its spirit.
- F. Good faith. Honestly. Openly. Sincerely. With deceit or fraud.
- G. An authentic copy of a deed or other instrument, made by notary and given to an interested party as evidence of his title; the original remaining in the public archives.
- H. A judicially attested copy of a testimonio.
- I. Not of sound mind. Insane. Mental infirmity.
- J. Chains or shackles for the feet. Irons used to secure the legs of convicts/prisoners.
- K. In the condition in which it was.

Thank You Our Sponsors



Thank You

For Your Continued Support and Contributions



Word Match Code:

1. Ab initio = D 2. Bona fide = F 3. Compulsa = H 4. Fetters = J
5. Gratis dictum = C 6. In statu quo = K 7. Litera = E 8. Non compos metis = I
9. Quash = A 10. Testimonio = G 11. Verus = B

About Legal Assistants/Paralegals of Southern West Virginia

Legal Assistants/Paralegals of Southern West Virginia ("LAPSWV") is a non-profit organization established in 2004 in Charleston and Huntington, West Virginia.

LAPSWV promotes high standards in the legal assistant profession, establishes networking resources for legal assistants/paralegals, and provides integrity in the legal community. LAPSWV also contributes to the community by participating in a number of charitable programs. LAPSWV strives to raise professional standards in the legal assistant/paralegal profession by providing opportunities for personal growth and development through educational experiences and the networking with other professionals.

Legal Assistants/Paralegals of Southern West Virginia was founded:

- To further education among members of the legal assistant/paralegal profession;*
- To provide a forum for the exchange of viewpoints on matters involving the legal assistant/paralegal profession;*
- To promote and involve the legal assistant/paralegal in the development of guidelines on the standardization of the legal assistant profession;*
- To establish good fellowship among association members, the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. ("NALA"), and members of the legal community;*
- To encourage a high order of ethical and professional attainment;*
- To cooperate with bar associations and other law related organizations; and*
- To support and carry out the programs, purposes, aims and goals of NALA.*

Legal Assistants/Paralegals
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Direct Comments/Questions
concerning this newsletter to:
LAPSWV Newsletter Committee



Ab Initio is a quarterly publication of Legal Assistants/Paralegals of Southern West Virginia (LAPSWV).

None of the information contained herein is intended to be, nor should it be construed as legal advice.