



Ab Initio

Fall 2017

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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

Promote Yourself.....4

LAPSWV 13th Annual Seminar & Meeting.....5

Sustaining Members In the Spotlight.....8

LAPSWV Word Match.....9

LAPSWV Events • Lunch & Learns.....10

Upcoming Events & CLE.....11

NALA Campus Live.....11

LAPSWV Member Birthdays.....11

2016-2017 Executive Committee.....12

2017-2018 Standing & Special Committees.....12

Current Membership Statistics.....12

About LAPSWV.....13



From Your President

As I sat down to contemplate this writing, I was reminded of the report I had written for the 13th Annual Seminar and Business Meeting. You see, buried deep within the confines of the 13th Annual Business Meeting Packets are the reports of the Executive Committee officers. And, much of what I said in that writing is what I feel compelled to write about again. I trust that "self-plagiarism" is acceptable, so here are the highlights:

“If I had to pick one word that expresses how this year has been for me, it would be **blessed!** I am blessed to work with such dedicated and amazing ladies on the Executive Committee; I am blessed by the members that volunteered to assist with the Fall and Spring Meetings, Lunch & Learns, and so much more; I am blessed by the speakers that LAPSWV has been able to present this past year, and on and on the list goes...! I am proud to be a part of an organization that promotes the education and professional development of legal assistants and paralegals. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president for the past year.

...

It has been said that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. As we look to the future of LAPSWV, my hope is that we are each mindful of the very important role that each and every member of LAPSWV plays in the growth and development of this organization. You have gifts, talents, knowledge and connections that are uniquely yours. When we collectively come together and share these valuable assets with each other, we experience personal and professional growth.

Invest in your future and the profession you have chosen by playing an active role in LAPSWV. I am excited to see what the future holds for LAPSWV through the strength of our proverbial chain and the length of that chain!”

I look forward to seeing each of you at the Lunch & Learns, quarterly meetings, and other social gatherings that LAPSWV has planned for the 2017-2018 year!

Sherri L. Rasmussen
President



LAPSWV Wants You!



**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.**

PLEASE CONTACT

SHERRI RASMUSSEN • president@lapswv.org

Or

MICA SPRATT • firstvicepresident@lapswv.org

For More Information



Promote Yourself

Written by Melanie Hicks, CP



Do you have an elevator speech? If you are like me when I was first asked this question, you are thinking to yourself "What is an elevator speech?" Fortunately, the person who asked me that question was teaching an entrepreneur class that I was attending. I learned that business owners should have an elevator speech that tells someone everything you would want them to know about your business in the time it takes to ride an elevator to the floor you are going to. So I think that concept is applicable to paralegals!

Most of us have a hard time talking about our skills because we are conditioned not brag about ourselves. However, we need to be able to articulate our talents and strengths to employers, potential employers, and colleagues. The best place to start is to list the skills that you believe are your strongest and in which you have the most experience. Having experience in targeted areas of the law becomes a great talking point in your elevator speech. Each of us knows our strongest skills, but we never stop to think about them or write them down. Give yourself credit for the things you do well.

After you have a list of skills, add some personal qualities that will be beneficial in your job. If you enjoy meeting new people, that information will boost your elevator speech. It is important to recognize both strengths and weakness in our personalities to find positions that are most suitable and ultimately successful. I like to work independently so I communicate that to my employers and colleagues to provide insight into my work habits. Utilize your personal strengths to effectively promote your skills.

Next, list your accomplishments, such as obtaining certification or advanced certification. Include local and national organizations that you are involved in. Note any programs or classes you have taken that may be valuable to your position. If you have a professional bio, use information that is included in it. Your participation in these opportunities demonstrates your motivation to continue to develop skills and knowledge of the legal or business field. These accomplishments will round out a great elevator speech.

Write your elevator speech! Then practice reading the speech until it becomes automatic and flows smoothly. The instructor of the class I attended allotted a time limit of three minutes for this type of recitation. Find a trusted friend or colleague to practice presenting your speech. During a job interview, for example, if an interviewer says "So tell me about yourself", you will be able to present a soliloquy that is natural, well-thought out, and comprehensive. Once the elevator speech is engrained in your mind, it can be adjusted in the moment to correspond to your situation.

There are many times when an elevator speech is important to have in your arsenal, such as when approaching an employer about a raise, making a case for why you should receive an assignment, or asking for a promotion. Review the content occasionally to make sure it is up-to-date and reflects your current position in your career. It is not easy to "toot our own horns" but having an elevator speech prepared is a great way to easily promote yourself when the opportunity presents itself. Go you!



Melanie Hicks, CP, obtained her Associate Degree in Paralegal Studies in 1994, passed the NALA Certified Paralegal exam in 2010, and has worked for more than 22 years for sole practitioners in various areas of the legal field. Melanie incorporated Paralegal Solutions, LLC, in 2008 and currently works as a freelance paralegal for a criminal defense law firm and a civil litigation sole practitioner. Melanie is the current NALA Liaison for her local affiliated association LAPSWV and is a member of NALA's Professional Development Committee.

LAPSWV

13th Annual Seminar & Meeting

LAPSWV 13th Annual Seminar & Meeting was held at the Bridge Valley Community & Technical College Advanced Technology Center in South Charleston, West Virginia on June 9, 2017. The seminar, agenda entitled "Here Comes the Judge", was graced by the following honored guests:

- Martha J. Hill, Esquire, Administrative Law Judge, West Virginia Insurance Commission
- Judge Joanna I. Tabit, Kanawha County Circuit Court
- Judge R. Joseph Zak, Family Court Judge, Kanawha County
- Judge Michael A. Sisson, Kanawha Magistrate Court
- Justice Robin J. Davis, West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals
- Judge Stephanie D. Thacker, United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit



The LAPSWV Executive Committee for 2017-2018 was named.



Awards were given and members were honored. The seminar proved educational, informative and a wonderful time was had by all.

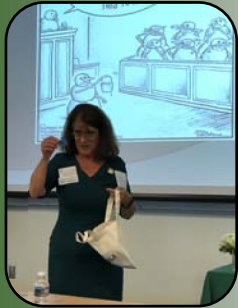
LAPSWV

13th Annual Seminar & Meeting



LAPSWV

13th Annual Seminar & Meeting





LAPSWV

Sustaining Members In The Spotlight



Melania Streski

Streski Reporting



Dean Boerger

Boerger Investigation
Services, LLC



Donna Donathan

Mountwest Community &
Technical College



Lynn Nelson

CWS-The Document
Solution

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 president@lapswv.org)*



Match the Word on the Left with the Correct Definition on the Right

1. Ad damnum clause

2. Ad litem

3. Chattel

4. Gravis

5. Ipso facto

6. Jura rerum

7. Non assumpsit

8. Nul tort

9. Peculium

10. Laches

11. Memorandum opinion

12. Parol evidence

A. Serious—Of importance

B. Rights of things

C. For the suit; for the litigation

D. Oral proof of contract terms which are not contained within the written contract document

E. No wrong done

F. To the damages—Statement found in the complaint which states plaintiff's monetary loss

G. A doctrine by which equitable relief is denied to one who has waited too long to seek relief

H. Very short opinion of a court

I. Personal property

J. Private property

K. By the fact itself

L. Plea in defense that he did not promise

LAPSWV



Events • Lunch & Learns

A wonderful time was had by all during the LAPSWV Social, hosted by Sustaining Member,

Dean Boerger with Boerger Investigative Services, LLC.

Silver Level Business Partner, Steptoe & Johnson PLLC provided the beautiful outdoor facility where the social was held.

The social was held in an effort to invite potential new members to LAPSWV.



You are Invited!
LAPSWV SOCIAL
Just For Fun!!!

Drinks & Appetizers provided

Hosted by Dean Boerger
Boerger Investigative Services, LLC

Thursday, May 25, 2017
6-8 PM

Bahnhof Wvsthous & Biergarten
745 7th Ave., Huntington, WV

RSVP to Mica Spratt at
SecondVicePresident@lapswv.org

GreetingsIsland.com



Wishing LAPSWV Members A
Happy Birthday

July Birthdays

Evie Cooper
Nicole Dingess
Thomas Edwards
Taylor Laughlin

August Birthdays

Lisa Desposito

September Birthdays

Violet Lambert
Sandra Bowles
Krista Scott

October

Jessica N. Preast
Linda L. Qullen
Loretta J. Walker
Tamara L. Welch
Samantha White
Jill I. Francisco
Kristi Smith
Rhonda Swartz
Terri Swindler

Word Match Answers: 1-F To the damages-Statement found in the complaint which states plaintiff's monetary loss 2-C For the suit-For the litigation 3-I Personal property 4-A Serious-Of importance 5-K By the fact itself 6-B Rights of things 7-L Plea in defense that he did not promise 8-E No wrong done 9-J Private property 10-G A doctrine by which equitable relief is denied to one who has waited too long to seek relief 11-H Very short opinion of a court 12-D Oral proof of contract terms which are not contained within the written contract document

Upcoming Events & CLE

Mark Your Calendars for the
Fall Meeting

John Street, West Virginia Supreme Court • Guest Speaker

Event Will Be Catered by the Olive Garden

November 14, 2017 • 6:00 pm—8:00 pm

The Masters Law Firm LC

181 Summers Street, Charleston, WV 25301



Upcoming Webinars

Webinars are a fast, convenient and now an even more affordable way to get the education you need.

1.0 hour webinars: \$39 for Members and \$59 for Nonmembers
1.5 hour webinars: \$39 for Members and \$59 for Nonmembers
2.0 hour webinars: \$49 for Members and \$69 for Nonmembers

If you have an Active Membership type, you may use your \$80 gift certificate toward these webinars. Contact NALA to apply your gift certificate today!

Litigation for Trusts and Estates
October 24 2017—11:00 am CT - CLE Hours: 1.5

The presentation focuses on the special issues that arise when handling litigation of matters associated with trusts and estates including breach of fiduciary duty, the God complex, beneficiaries who "want their check" and general downright nefarious activities.

Paralegal Practice Tips for Commercial Real Estate Transactions

October 26, 2017—12:00 pm CT - CLE Hours: 1.5

This presentation will take attendees on a beginning-to-end tour of a typical commercial real estate transaction and highlight critical areas and processes in which paralegals can and should take the lead for your legal team. Also included are: organizational practice tips, a detailed look at identification of title and survey issues and problem-solving strategies, an overview of other due diligence considerations, methods for getting your supervising attorney's attention and response, strategies for a timely and efficient closing, and suggestions for moving outside your comfort zone. Attendees will gain insight into the life cycle of a transaction, and be able to identify new or expanded responsibilities for themselves in their current workplace.

These dates and times don't work for your schedule but you still need CLE? How about taking one of NALA's **On-Demand Webinars?** Learn whenever it is convenient for you.

NALA | 7666 E. 61st St., #315 | Tulsa | OK | 74133

Available On-Demand Webinars

2017 Employment Law Updates
5th and 14th Amendments
A Basic Guide for Paralegals: Ethics; Confidentiality; and Privilege
Advanced Contracts—Commercial Leases
Advanced Legal Aspects of a Feature Film
American Legal System
An Analysis of Construction Defect Claims
An Analysis of Products and Completed Operations Claims
An Introduction to Estate Planning
Anti-Money Laundering
Are You Sabotaging Your Annual Performance Review
Attorney-Client Privilege Boot Camp for Paralegals
Avoiding Landmines in the Nonprofit Arena
Basic Business Organizations
Basic Due Diligence
Basic Torts
CASA
Cell Phone Forensics
Civil Litigation—A Step by Step Look at the Process
Classification of Law
Collection Law from A to Z
Communicating with Charisma
Contracts-How to Manage Document Flow and the Review Process
Copyright Law and the Internet
CP Review—American Legal System
CP Review—Basic Business Organizations
CP Review—Civil Litigation
CP Review—Contract Law
CP Review—Ethics
CP Review—Judgment and Legal Analysis
CP Review—Legal Research
CP Review—Written Communications
Crowd Funding & Other Topics
Dealing with the IRS—Perception vs Reality
Dealing with the IRS Collection Division
Defending Questionable Claims for Workers' Compensation Benefits
Deposition Video Tips and Tricks
Discovering the Potential for Social Media in Discovery
Discovery
Dissecting Provisions of Purchase and Sale Agreements for Real Property
Domestic Violence Victims
Dram Shop Case: What is it and Do I Have One?
Due Diligence for the Transactional Paralegal:
Discover Your Inner Detective
Effective Time Management for Today's Paralegal
Enhancing Your Trial Presentation
Estate Planning for the Modern Family
Estate Planning in Action
Excel for Paralegals

Many Additional On-Demand Webinars Available...

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

2017-2018 LAPSWV Executive Committee



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



Mica Spratt
First Vice President
Lamp Bartram Levy Trautwein & Perry, PLLC
firstvicepresident@lapswv.org



Maria Cain, CP
Second Vice President
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Kelly Mullins
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Kristi Markins
Secretary
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Tammy Welch, ACP
Parliamentarian / Historian
West Virginia Mutual Insurance Company
parliamentarian@lapswv.org

2017-2018 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> Maria Cain, CP—Chair Mica Spratt Jill Francisco, ACP 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</p>

<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 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!

Active Members:	35
Sustaining Members:	6
Student Members:	7
Provisional Members:	1
TOTAL:	49
Pending Renewals:	0
Pending Student Applications:	0
ACPs:	6
CLAs and CPs:	5

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
Of Southern West Virginia
P.O. Box 11488
Charleston, WV 25339
Website: www.lapswv.org

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.