



TYLER AREA ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL PROFESSIONALS OCTOBER, 2021 NEWSLETTER

President's Message

Dear TAALP Members:

Oh my goodness...this weather lately, hasn't it been amazing!!!! Still a little warm in the afternoon but the mornings and evenings are wonderful!!!!!!

Did you know that The State Bar of Texas was the first bar association in the United States to create a separate division for paralegals. The Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas (the Division) was created on October 23, 1981, and has been in existence for 38 years. In honor of the many contributions made by the paralegal community and the Paralegal Division, the Senate of the State of Texas adopted [Proclamation No. 1144](#), recognizing October 23 as Texas Paralegal Day.

TAALP will celebrate Texas Paralegal Day at our regular monthly meeting on **Thursday EVENING, October 14, 2021, immediately after work**, at Clear Springs Restaurant, 6519 S. Broadway Ave., Tyler, TX. We have the honor of having Debra Race speak to us this month regarding Ethics. We will receive one free hour of NALA and TBLS approved CLE credit for ethics. As part of our Texas Paralegal Day celebration that evening, TAALP is buying one free happy hour adult beverage!!! In addition to the awesome door prizes provided to us by our meeting sponsor, which is **Deposition Resources**, TAALP will be giving out some additional door prizes...so there will be lots of goodies. Come and mix and mingle with others in our profession who we so often never have the opportunity to get to know. Thank you **Deposition Resources** for sponsoring our meeting this month, and also thank you **Collins Investigations** for co-sponsoring this Texas Paralegal Day celebration. It makes me sad that I will miss this month's meeting as I will be on vacation.

Once again this year we will hold our annual Christmas Ornament Exchange meeting. The location will be announced soon. The ornament exchanges in the past have been a big hit, so many cute ornaments given/received. So, be on the lookout for a cute ornament to exchange while you are out shopping (they are already everywhere)...price limit is \$10. Mark your calendar for **December 9th at noon** for this fun and festive event.

Our community service recipients for November and December will be the Salvation Army and The East Texas Food Bank. What great organizations to share our wealth. Your generosity and willingness to share your abundance never ceases to amaze me! More information on this will be provided in the near future. You can email Candy at candice.dillon@lgbs.com to learn more about how you can help. Your generosity and charitable spirit are very much appreciated.

Candice Dillon is also our Sunshine Committee chair person this year. She will keep up with the tradition of sending birthday cards and get well cards when needed. So, if you know of a member who is sick, facing surgery, death of a family member, or any other crisis, please let us know. We care!

THANK YOU members, vendors and sponsors who make our professional organization what it is. You are AWESOME!

See you Thursday!

Leatha Kopech

Leatha Kopech

TAALP can help get your name out to our members!

For more information, email:

branditurchi@gmail.com

Transcript Ad Rates (Per Month):

Business Card - \$10.00

Quarter Page - \$20.00

Half Page - \$30.00

Full Page - \$50.00

NOTICES:

The price of lunch is \$15.00, which covers an hour of CLE and a full course meal (salad, entrée, drink and dessert). Feel free to bring your own lunch with you should you chose not to eat the catered meal.

When responding to your evite, please note whether you will attend and whether or not you will eat so an accurate count can be provided to the caterer. If an RSVP is made with a notation that a meal will be paid for and you do not attend the meeting, you will still be responsible for the cost of that meal. Those with extenuating circumstances will be taken under advisement.

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you at the next meeting!

TAALP
MINUTES OF October 6, 2021 BOARD MEETING
By: Gaye Boynton, Recording Secretary

The Executive Board met at Texas Music City Grill and Smokehouse on October 6, 2021, for the monthly meeting. The following board members were present: Jo Ruth Hancock, President-Elect; Lisa Betts, 1st Vice President; Candace Dillon, 2nd Vice President; Tina Knighton, Treasurer; Brandi Turchi, Corresponding Secretary; Helen Koch, Parliamentarian; Gaye Boynton, Recording Secretary; and Carrie King, Executive Advisor.

Absent: Leatha Kopech, President

Jo Ruth Hancock called the meeting to order at 12:09 pm

LEATHA KOPECH, President - ABSENT

Old Business:

- 2021-22 Membership total to date 77
- September meeting attendance 24
- Texas Paralegal Day – October 23 - Clear Springs is reserved
- Christmas Luncheon – Ornament Exchange – Jalapeno Tree

• **New Business:**

- October Sponsor – Deposition Resources
- Additional Sponsors for October –Mike Collins, Etc. – Gift cards
- State Bar Paralegal Division Dues

JO RUTH HANCOCK, President-Elect

- Jalapeno Tree confirmed for November and December Meetings. Discussed alternate location for Christmas meeting
- NALA Affiliate dues have been paid

LISA BETTS, 1st Vice President

- Membership Renewals - We have 77 renewals thus far
- Evite for October 14th membership evening meeting - send evite by Thursday, October 7th at noon with reminder on Monday, October 11th . Location: Clear Springs – at 5:00 p.m., or immediately after work

CANDICE DILLON, 2nd Vice President

- October: Debra Race - Ethics
- Community Services: Salvation Army/East Texas Food Bank

GAYE BOYNTON, Recording Secretary

- Board Meeting Minutes

Gaye Boynton moved that the Minutes of the September, 2021, board meeting be approved, as reported in the Transcript. The motion was seconded and carried, the minutes were approved.

BRANDI TURCHI: Corresponding Secretary

- Publish the newsletter by Wednesday, October 13th. Deadline to get your information to Brandi is Friday, October 8, 2021, by 5:00 pm.
- New articles coming: In the Know (new law updates); This Day in History; and Food for Thought

TINA KNIGHTON, Treasurer

- September 2021 Treasurer's Report
- Banking discussion
- Budget meeting to be scheduled

Tina Knighton moved that the Treasurer's Report for September, 2021, be filed for audit. The motion was seconded and it carried.

CARRIE KING, Executive Advisor

- Status - Sound system and smaller screen have been purchased

Next Regular Meeting: October 14, 2021 – Clear Springs - Select Menu
Next Board Meeting: November 3, 2021 – TBT

The meeting concluded at 12:37 pm.

Gaye Boynton, Recording Secretary

Leatha Kopech, President

EMPLOYMENT – OCTOBER 2021

*Contact: Lisa Betts
TAALP Job Bank Coordinator
903.534.0200 or lisa@sscfirm.com*

Position	Practice Areas/Job Description	Location
1.Receptionist, Immigration Legal Asst. & Immigration Paralegal	Due to the length of the job description, please see my email from 4/15/21.	Tyler
2. Paralegal	Full time paralegal need for a small law firm located in downtown Tyler. Family law experience preferred but will consider any experience	Tyler
3. Legal Secretary/Assistant	We are looking for a skilled Legal Secretary/Assistant with a minimum of 1 year of experience in civil litigation law. Experience should include multi-line phone management, calendaring case deadlines, electronic organization/filing. This individual shall possess the ability to work independently in a fast-paced environment, in addition to working well within a team. We require strong organizational and writing skills as well as the ability to manage a high volume of work. Salary depends on experience. Performance based bonuses.	Tyler
4. Legal Assistant	Legal Assistant needed for family, criminal, and probate practice. Must have experience drafting pleadings, discovery, and trial attendance. Please see full description in my 8-3-21 email	Tyler
5. Administrative Legal Asst.	Full-time administrative legal assistant needed for downtown Tyler solo practice law office. Law office is a general practice, including bankruptcy, civil lawsuits, probate, and estates. Must be familiar with efile.txcourts.gov and PACER, as well as software programs for billing, calendaring, and word processing. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday.”	Tyler
6. Legal Assistant	Full-time legal assistant needed for Jacksonville law office. Law office is personal injury practice. Willing to train. Hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday	Jacksonville
7.Legal Assistant/Paralegal	Insurance Defendant Legal Assistant needed; please see email 9-1-21 with full job description	Tyler
8. Legal Assistant	A solo practitioner with this position being the only legal assistant. My areas of practice include probate, estate planning, guardianship, real estate, construction, business law, a limited litigation practice and mediations. The hours are 8:30 to 5:00 Monday thru Thursday and 8:30 to noon on Friday. The office is closed for lunch between	Tyler

	noon and 1:00. Experience is required. Salary and benefits are based on qualifications.	
9. Legal Assistant	A law firm located downtown is looking for the following: 3-8 years of experience. Would be nice if their experience is personal injury on the plaintiff side. It will be doing Medical Malpractice on the plaintiff's side.	Tyler
10. Legal Assistant	Full-time Legal Assistant needed for insurance defense firm. Health insurance, vacation, and courthouse holidays. The pay is hourly and depends on experience. Some law firm experience would be necessary.	Tyler
11. Legal Assistant	Full-time Legal Assistant needed for a Wills, Probate, Guardianship, and General Civil Practice solo firm. The Applicant's experience and ability will determine salary and benefits. We have a SEP retirement plan. Have to be familiar with e-file, etc. Would prefer a few years of experience. I'll pay a fair salary.	Tyler
12. Legal Assistant	<p>Criminal Law Legal Assistant Position - Our law firm has an opening for a full-time legal assistant. This is a fast-paced, busy law firm that deals with criminal cases in Smith County; the counties contiguous to Smith County; and, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas.</p> <p>This assistant must be a self-starter who is well organized; able to multi-task; must be proficient in typing while maintaining 40WPM; must be able to handle a high volume of calls while maintaining a professional attitude; and, must have a can-do attitude.</p> <p>Paralegal responsibilities would include but are not limited to the following: Participating in new client interviews with attorneys; scheduling and docketing court settings; meeting with clients to review discovery and necessary paperwork for court hearings; appearing with attorneys in court; drafting correspondence; preparing and e-filing standard motions in felony cases; scheduling appointments for potential new clients and existing clients; putting together client files; and, breaking down cases for trial, as necessary.</p> <p>Generous benefits package offered. Candidates will be kept confidential.</p>	Tyler
13. Paralegal	A Longview law firm with an office in downtown Tyler is needing a full-time Paralegal for its	Tyler

	<p>Plaintiff personal injury practice. Must have at least 3-5 years of Paralegal experience.</p> <p>Requirements include; self-starter, trustworthy, be able to draft pleadings, discovery, complete the service process on a lawsuit, and be able to work independently. Benefits offered are: medical, dental, vision, retirement, and life insurance with a competitive pay. Any travel expenses and overtime are paid by firm.</p>	
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TAALP would like to thank all of the following for your membership:

Baker, Michele	Earls, Kristen	Lexitas	Taylor, Vickie
Beck, Karen	Field, Joanna	Liska, Rhonda	Tekell, Amanda
Bedlington, Sally	Green, Cecila	Luker, Kayla	Thedford, Kimberly
Betts, Lisa	Hall, Carrie	Marshall, Tracy	Toon, Kristine
Blair, Erin	Hancock, Jo Ruth	Martin, Melissa	Turchi, Brandi
Blubonnet Process Service	Harvey, Terri	Martinez, Marieliza	Vallery, Jo
Boynton, Gaye	Hemphill, Carla	May, Tamara	Wheeler, Connie
Brooks, Bonnie	Hesse, Wendy	Mayfield, Tammye	Wilgus, Melissa
Brotherton-Pyatt, Margaret	Heyder, Brittany	Mendell, Melissa	Williams, Brandi
Buchanan, Ann	Jackson, Laura	Parker, Nancy	Wootton, Magen
Carter, Kimberly	Jones, Christine	Penn, Ofelia	
Cash, Lanell	Jones, Gabby	Pilcher, Laney	
Clarkston, Paul	Kinard, Griselda	Rakestraw, Macy	
Clayton, Catherine	King, Carrie	Rex, Renda	
Collins Investigations	Knighton, Tina	Scirto, Hannah	
Connor, Sarah	Koch, Helen	Sepmoree, Tina	
Coplan, Patricia	Kopech, Leatha	Sherrill, Sharon	
Crawford, Melani	Kramer, Jackie	Shipp, Kelsey	
Crim, Nancy		Shirley, Racheal	
Deposition Resources		Skeen, Barbara	
Dillon, Candice		Skinner, Peggy	
Discovery Records		Slayter, Linda	
		Sparks, Rhonda	
		Spencer, Ashley	
		Stewart, Clothilda	

Our purpose of TAALP is:

- ✚ To establish good fellowship among association members, national and state legal associations, and members of the legal community.
- ✚ To encourage a high order of ethical and professional attainment.
- ✚ To advance high standards of integrity and professionalism for legal professionals to the end that the public and the legal profession may be better served.
- ✚ To further education among members of the legal profession.
- ✚ To cooperate with state and local bar associations.
- ✚ To further the interests of legal support staff and professionals through this Association.
- ✚ To support and carry out the programs, purposes, aims and goals of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.

The benefits you will have with TAALP are:

- ✚ CLE approved programs and seminars
- ✚ Discounts to TAALP seminars
- ✚ Access to job bank
- ✚ Subscription to monthly newsletter - The Transcript
- ✚ Great network to other legal professionals

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Michael J. Collins
Private Investigator

COLLINS
INVESTIGATIONS

110 N. College Ave
Suite 1504
Tyler, TX 75702
Lic. No. A08864

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FAX 903-526-6453
mikecollins@sprintmail.com

Background Searches

Jury Research

Interviews

mikecollins@sprintmail.com


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Happy Birthday:

October Birthdays

Carrie King 6th
Griselda Kinard 7th
Tina Sepmoree 15th
Bonnie Brooks 20th
Paul Clarkston 20th
Amanda Tekell 22nd
Brandi Turchi 22nd
Candy Dillon 29th
Brittany Heyder 29th
Clothilda Stewart 31st



In the Know

New Texas Laws that took effect September 1, 2021:

By: **The Texas Tribune**

Shielding companies from car crash liability: [HB 19](#) requires [drivers of commercial vehicles](#) — including Ubers, Lyfts and delivery trucks — to be found liable in court for causing a car crash resulting in injury or death before a case can be brought against their employer.

Permitless carry: [House Bill 1927](#) allows Texans ages 21 and older [to carry handguns without training or a license](#) as long as they are not legally prevented from doing so.

Cite: <https://www.texastribune.org/2021/08/31/new-texas-laws-september-2021/>



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This Day in History

The State Bar of Texas made history in the United States on October 23, 1981, when it became the first state bar to form a paralegal division.

The State Bar Paralegal Division's creation came as a result of several years of work by the Legal Assistants Committee of the Bar and its staff in response to the growth and development of the paralegal profession, with the bar recognizing that paralegals' participation in the administration of justice, professional responsibility, and public service in cooperation with the bar was necessary. An additional reason for forming the division was to provide a statewide organization for paralegals that would serve as a central vehicle for effective communication and resolution of matters of mutual concern to paralegals throughout the state.

The idea for its creation is credited to attorneys Tom Hanna (executive director of the State Bar of Texas, 1978-1981) and Bob Towery, who was director of institutes for the State Bar of Texas and a member of the then-called "Legal Assistants Committee" of the State Bar. Hanna and Towery worked with the committee to develop a presentation to the State Bar Board of Directors and State Bar President Wayne Fisher. The board created the Paralegal Division (at that time titled the "Legal Assistant Division" of the State Bar of Texas) on October 23, 1981. The division's name was changed in 2005 to Paralegal Division, and the bar formally defined paralegal as:

"A paralegal is a person, qualified through various combinations of education, training or work experience, who is employed or engaged by a lawyer, law office, governmental agency, or other entity in a capacity or function which involves the performance, under the ultimate direction and supervision of a licensed attorney, of specifically delegated substantive legal work, which work, for the most part, requires a sufficient knowledge of legal principles and procedures that, absent such person, an attorney would be required to perform the task."

In 2006, the bar amended this definition to include education, training, and work experience standards. These standards are another major milestone in the division's history and are intended to assist the public in obtaining quality legal services, assist attorneys in their utilization of paralegals, and assist judges in determining whether paralegal work is a reimbursable cost when granting attorneys' fees.¹

The division has now supported paralegals for 40 years and has stayed true to the basic principles of its formation—to provide a professional association for paralegals to grow and focus on education and career development. As such, the division has provided a broad spectrum of opportunities for its members and continues to monitor the profession as a whole throughout Texas and the U.S. The division's leaders comprise an executive committee and district directors for 12 geographical regions across the state, as well as a coordinator (a two-time past division president). There are numerous committees that focus on various aspects for the division such as Membership, Ethics, Public Relations, Professional Development, and Publications, with numerous ad hoc committees concentrating on current issues of the profession. These leaders and committee members volunteer

their time and passion to contribute to the paralegal profession and community. The division has two appointed State Bar Board advisers who are kept updated on division activities throughout the year.

Since the first year, the division has participated in offering numerous educational opportunities for paralegals—through not only local district seminars across the state, participation in the Texas Forum and other events, but also a three-day statewide seminar since 1999 titled Texas Advanced Paralegal Seminar, or TAPS, held each fall in alternating cities. TAPS speakers are attorneys from all over the state presenting advanced topics. This is the largest and most comprehensive paralegal seminar held in Texas. Additionally, the division offers online CLE courses and maintains an online database of courses. This strong focus on education is also promoted by the division through its Ambassador Program, which consists of former presidents who volunteer to speak upon request on a variety of topics. These ambassadors travel the state to offer their services to other organizations and groups at no charge.

The Texas Supreme Court approved specialty certifications for paralegals under the Texas Board of Legal Specialization, and the division works closely with TBLS. The first exams were given in March 1994. The division has authored a guide available for its members to assist in studying for the TBLS exams.

The division has offered various news updates and publications to its members and in 1992 began publishing the *Texas Paralegal Journal* as a formal magazine, which was offered in a print format for numerous years but now is in a digital format, allowing the publication to reach an expanded audience. The division also has a monthly newsletter, *Paralegal Pulse*, which is produced by the board of directors and offers the most current news and updates for the month, articles, and geographic news.

Additionally, one of the largest member benefits and resources is the division's e-group. Members post questions, share forms, assist each other in locating experts and vendors, share employment opportunities, and much more.

Members of the division authored the *Paralegal Ethics Handbook* in 2007, which is updated each year, and is available for purchase through Thomson Reuters. This handbook is used by colleges and law firms nationwide and is the only publication of its kind, specifically focusing on ethics for Texas paralegals.

The division, like the bar, strongly encourages pro bono work by its members and offers opportunities for its members to participate, as well as an annual award honoring a member for pro bono work.

Any profession is only as strong as its continuity, and as such, the division encourages new members to the profession to use its mentor program where entry-level paralegals are paired with veteran members for guidance and career development.

Division members also have the opportunity to join the Texas Bar College and various sections of the bar. Additionally, several division members serve on various State Bar committees.

As another educational opportunity, with a bit of history and fun added in, the division offers an annual trip to Europe where travelers can join in learning about various law and court procedures in other countries as well as the history of that country as it relates to its laws.

The division also participates in an annual meeting of all regional paralegal associations in Texas known as Texas Alliance of Paralegal Associations. Over 25 paralegal organizations come together for this annual event to discuss current topics involving paralegals and the legal profession.

Due to a Texas legislative resolution a number of years ago, October 23 of each year is declared Paralegal Day in the state of Texas. The resolution states:

Paralegals are vital resources to their firms, performing valuable services for and under the direction of an attorney, and their work requires a thorough knowledge of legal concepts and facts. October 23 marks the anniversary of the founding of the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas, a division established to promote high standards of conduct, professional ethics, and responsibility through continuing legal education and cooperation with the State Bar of Texas. The goals of the Paralegal Division are to achieve more economical and improved legal services throughout the state, to focus on benefits for its members and the paralegal profession, and to develop opportunities, incentives, and recognition for legal education. Through their exceptional talents and expertise, paralegals provide valuable services that contribute significantly to the efficient functioning of the judicial system in the Lone Star State and they are indeed worthy of special recognition.

This year, the division is celebrating 40 years and continues to remain a leader across the nation for paralegals and other paralegal associations to continue to grow as the legal profession grows.^{TBJ}

Notes

1. See <https://txpd.org/about-pages/texas-paralegal-definition-and-standards/>.



SUSI BOSS

is the 2021-2022 president of the State Bar of Texas Paralegal Division, which she has been a member for 18 years. She has been a senior paralegal at Higdon, Hardy & Suflacht for 20 years, focusing on family law. Boss holds an associate degree in legal studies.

JAVAN JOHNSON

is a certified paralegal in civil trial law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. She is a charter member of the State Bar of Texas Paralegal Division and a past president. Johnson serves as chair of the Paralegal Division's 40th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee.

Cite:

<https://www.texasbar.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=articles&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=54788#top>

Food for Thought

“You need to learn how to select your thoughts just the same way you select your clothes every day. This is a power you can cultivate. If you want to control things in your life so bad, work on the mind. That’s the only thing you should be trying to control.”

Source: Elizabeth Gilbert, Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman’s Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Inodnesia

TAALP
would like to extend a
BIG “THANK YOU”
to DAIRY QUEEN OF TYLER,
for donating the nice TREATS
members are finding in their
birthday cards!!
Be Sure To Frequent Your Local
AIRY QUEEN!





TAALP EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021-2022

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