



## TYLER AREA ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL PROFESSIONALS MARCH, 2021 NEWSLETTER

### *President's Message*

Leatha Kopech, PP, PLS

Dear TAALP Members:

I sure was hoping by now we would have some spring like weather!!!! What about that crazy snowmageddon, was that not unbelievable???? I hope you all survived with no or minimal damage. I know I learned that I am not cut out to be a pioneer woman. I don't know about you but I have had enough snow to last me a lifetime. Is anyone else ready to see some spring colors and feel the warmer temperatures? We also get to move the clocks forward this weekend, I love when it gets dark later. I feel like I actually have time do things when I get home in the evenings.

Join us Thursday, March 11, 2021, for our noon meeting at the Jalapeno Tree, 420 W SW Loop 323, Tyler, TX. Our speaker this month is Kline Pillow, his topic will be: *Legal Planning for the Ageing Process: The 5 Big Mistakes*. **THANK YOU Deposition Resources** for sponsoring our meeting this month!!

Things you will want to remember:

- \*Half-price membership for new and renewing members for the remainder of our 2020-21 year (Jan. 1 – June 30). Be sure to share this with friends and co-workers, and invite them to join TAALP!

- \*April 8, 2021, evening membership meeting and happy hour and membership social. The location is still being worked out, but it will some place super fun special for all our members.

Another friendly reminder that we would love to see some new faces on the TAALP Board. Election for next year's board is approaching fast. We will be taking nominations in May, and our June meeting is Election Day. We would love to have you serve on the Board. If you are interested in serving and have questions, please reach out to any of our current Board members. Their names, position and contact information are on the last page of this newsletter. Active members, remember that in order to be nominated for an office and for active voting members, your active membership status must be in good standing. In order to ensure that you remain in good standing, you cannot miss attendance at one meeting (either regular or board) per month for three (3) consecutive months during any fiscal year. If a member misses attendance at one meeting (either regular or board) per month for three (3) consecutive months during any fiscal year, then the member will be place on "associate" status, without refund of dues, for the remainder of the fiscal year in which the violation occurred or until the said member has attended one meeting (either regular or board) per month for two (2) consecutive months, at which time the member may be reinstated as an active member. So to paraphrase that, just make sure you don't miss attending meetings 3 months in a row! If you have, then please attend the two monthly meetings in a row before May 1<sup>st</sup> to reinstate your active status. If you have any questions or concerns about your attendance and current active status, please contact Melissa Wallace, [melissa.wallace@burtonoil.com](mailto:melissa.wallace@burtonoil.com) regarding your attendance/active status.

Leatha Kopech

**TAALP can help get your name out to our members!**

**For more information, email:**

**[brandit@brownbaumansmith.com](mailto:brandit@brownbaumansmith.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!

**TYLER AREA ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL PROFESSIONALS  
MINUTES OF MARCH 3, 2021 BOARD MEETING**

By: Laura Brownlow, Recording Secretary

The executive Board met at Texas Music City Grill on Wednesday, March 3, 2021 for the March monthly board meeting. The following board members were present: Leatha Kopech, President; Jo Ruth Hancock, President-Elect; Melissa Wallace, First Vice President (by Zoom); Tina Knighton, Second Vice President, Laura Brownlow, Recording Secretary; Lisa Betts, Treasurer (by Zoom); and Carrie King, Executive Advisor; Helen Koch, Parliamentarian.

Brandi Turchi; Corresponding Secretary was Absent

Leatha Kopech called the meeting to order at 12:18pm.

**LEATHA KOPECH, President:**

**Old Business:**

- February meeting attendance: In Person – 18; Zoom – 12
- Half Price Membership – Now through June

**New Business:**

- March Luncheon – The Jalapeno Tree. (In Person or by Zoom)
- March Sponsorship – Deposition Resources.
- April Meeting – Evening Meeting – Location TBD.
- Notice of absence for April Meeting.
- Legal Professional of the Year – contact made with Barbara Skeen regarding nominations/status.
- Scholarships – vote regarding adding a 4<sup>th</sup> scholarship – passed.
- Scholarships – contact will be made with Barbara Skeen regarding awarding scholarships.

**JO RUTH HANCOCK, President-Elect:**

- Menu for March Membership Luncheon will be emailed.

**MELISSA WALLACE, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Attending by Zoom**

- 2020-21 Renewal Membership total to date 99 regular members with 6 of those being vendor members as of March 2, 2021
- Evite for March 11, 2021 membership meeting – send evite Friday March 5, 2021 with a couple of reminders; RSVP Tuesday, March 9, 2021 by noon.  
\*\*Must reply if attending in person or virtually and if eating\*\*  
Location – The Jalapeno Tree  
Menu – will be sent prior to meeting to those attending in person.  
Orders – returned to Jo Ruth prior to meeting..

**TINA KNIGHTON, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**

- March Klinen Pillow – Legal Planning for the Aging Process: The 5 Big Mistakes
- April Matt Rowan – TBD

- May Doug Ritcheson – TBD

**LAURA BROWNLOW, Recording Secretary:**

- February Board Meeting Minutes as reported in the Transcript

Laura Brownlow moved that the Minutes of the February, 2021, board meeting be approved, as recorded by Carrie King in the Transcript. The motion was seconded, and it carried.

**BRANDI TURCHI, Corresponding Secretary: Absent**

- Publish the newsletter by Wednesday, March 10, 2021. **Deadline** to get your information to Brandi is **Friday, March 5, 2021, by 5:00 pm.**
- March spotlight member: Brenda Velasco

**LISA BETTS, Treasurer:**

- February 2021 Treasurer's Report

Lisa Betts moved that the Treasurer's Report for February 2021, be filed for audit. The motion was seconded, and it carried.

- Payment from member for February meeting – RSVP'd but did not attend
- March Meeting – Zoom Roll Call

**CARRIE KING, Executive Advisor:**

**HELEN KOCH, Parliamentarian: Absent**

- **Law Day: If in person, will be in September**
- **Law Day: Looking into possibility of Zoom**
- **No 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Mock Trials unless specifically requested**

**Next Regular Meeting:**

**March 11, 2021 – The Jalapeno Tree**

**Next Board Meeting:**

**March 31, 2021 – TBD**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:33pm.

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Laura Brownlow  
Recording Secretary

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Leatha Kopech, President

### EMPLOYMENT – MARCH 2021

*Contact: Lisa Betts*

*TAALP Job Bank Coordinator*

*903.534.0200 or [lisa@sscfirm.com](mailto:lisa@sscfirm.com)*

Position	Practice Areas/Job Description	Location
1. Legal Assistant	Full-time legal assistant needed for solo Practitioner with guardianship and probate experience	Tyler
2. Court coordinator	The County Court at Law in Rusk County, Henderson, Texas is looking for a Court Coordinator. Job duties include scheduling hearings, managing dockets in probate, misdemeanor, family and juvenile matters. Requires computer skills and operating net data system. State/County benefits	Henderson
3. Legal Asst/Admin Asst	<p>A downtown Tyler firm will be hiring a Legal Assistant/Administrative Assistant to begin April 15th or April 30th. Below are skills that are needed:</p> <p>Familiar with this Software: Microsoft Office 2019 (Word, Excel, Outlook) Quicken 2014 Home and Business Bankruptcy Pro for Windows v. 12 Yahoo/AT&amp;T Email Timeslips 2006 Adobe Acrobat Pro 2020 Efiling PACER</p> <p>Familiar with these areas of Law: Bankruptcy - Business and Individual Probate Estates General Civil (including divorce suits, collection suits, etc.) Real Estate Attorney has a general practice</p> <p>Duties: Duties include, but are not limited to, setting up files and assigning file numbers, file management, drafting initial pleadings in cases, managing cases, scheduling and keeping calendar (hard and electronic copies), calculating and calendaring response dates and deadlines, initial consultations with potential clients and scheduling appointments, timekeeping and billing, filings via <a href="http://efile.txcourts.gov">efile.txcourts.gov</a> and PACER, various administrative duties, various office management duties.</p> <p>The firm does not offer health insurance. Typical vacation time after 90 days.</p>	Tyler

	Typical sick time after 90 days.	
4. Assistant	Part-time Office assistant needed with flexible schedule. Pay is \$17.00/hr. Would prefer office experience	Tyler
5. Court Coordinator	Wood County, County Court is looking for a full-time Court Coordinator. Please see my email from 3-9-21 on how to apply	Quitman

NOTE: Job postings are for TAALP members. If you share with a friend/co-worker, please advise them that they have to be a member in order for the job bank to be shared or their resume forwarded.

**TAALP would like to thank all of the following for your membership:**

Amaya, Lia	Earls, Kristen	Langston, Denise	Taylor, Vickie
Ascencio, Gabriela	East Texas Crisis Center	Lexitas	Tekell, Amanda
Avery, Jacqueline	Epic Office Solutions	Liska, Rhonda	Thedford, Kimberly
Berrum, Melissa	Evans, Karen S.	Luker, Kayla	Thomas, Deborah
Betts, Lisa	Field, Joanna	Mapes, Sarah	Toon, Kristine
Blair, Erin	Freeman, Tabitha	Marshall, Tracy	Torres, Magali
Boynton, Gaye	Godwin, Carol	Martin, Melissa	Turchi, Brandi
Brooks, Bonnie	Goley, Carol	Martinez, Marieliza	Vallery, Jo
Brotherton-Pyatt, Margaret	Hall, Carrie	May, Tamara	Velasco, Brenda
Brownlow, Laura	Hancock, Jo Ruth	Mayfield, Tammye	Vickers, Hailey
Buchanan, Ann	Hankins, Melanie	McLeod, Jacob	Wallace, Melissa
Carter, Kimberly	Harvey, Terri	McMillan, Jocelyn	Watson, Christy
Cash, Lanell	Hemphill, Carla	Mendell, Melissa	Wharen, Marcia
Clarkston, Paul	Henry, Sally	Miller, Susan	Wheeler, Connie
Collins Investigations	Hesse, Wendy	Pilcher, Laney	White, April
Connor, Sarah	Heyder, Brittany	Rakestraw, Macy	Wich, Jodi
Coplan, Patricia	Jackson, Laura	Rex, Renda	Wilgus, Melissa
Crawford, Melani	Johnson, JaKayla	Scirto, Hannah	Williams, Brandi
Crim, Nancy	Johnson, Sandy	Sepmoree, Tina	Williams, Cayce Della
Deck, Mary	Jones, Christine	Sherrill, Sharon	Wootton, Magen
Deposition Resources	Jones, Gabby	Shipp, Kelsey	
Dillon, Candice	Jones, Jordae	Shirley, Racheal	
Discovery Records	King, Carrie	Skeen, Barbara	
	Kirby, Cindy	Slayter, Linda	
	Knighton, Tina	Sparks, Rhonda	
	Koch, Helen	Starcher, Darcy	
	Kopech, Leatha	Starkey, Emily	
	Kramer, Jackie		

**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



# TAALP

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## TYLER AREA ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL PROFESSIONALS

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**Office of:** Barbara Skeen, CP, Chairman  
TAALP Scholarship Committee  
c/o Mewbourne Oil Company  
3620 Old Bullard Road  
Tyler, Texas 75701  
(903) 534-7643 (Direct line)  
Email: [bskeen@mewbourne.com](mailto:bskeen@mewbourne.com)

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### SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES

- SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT:** At least three scholarships in the amount of \$500.00 each will be awarded. One scholarship is designated for an Applicant in a Paralegal program.
- APPLICATIONS:** Applications must be postmarked no later than April 15, 2021. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- ANNOUNCEMENT OF WINNER:** The winners of the scholarships will be announced at a regular meeting of the Association; however, the winners will be advised immediately upon selection.
- SCHOLARSHIP AWARD:** Scholarship certificates will be presented to the recipients at a future TAALP meeting.
- PAYABLE:** Each scholarship is payable in one installment to the recipient and presented with the certificate.
- ELIGIBILITY:**
- (1) Applicant must be a high school senior or currently enrolled in a school of advanced education, i.e. junior college or four-year college and working toward a career in the legal field;
  - (2) Applicant must have a **grade point average of 3.0** or higher; and
  - (3) Applicant must be enrolled in or intending to enroll in a field of study relating to the legal profession.

# T A A L P

## TYLER AREA ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL PROFESSIONALS

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### SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Soc. Sec. No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s) or Guardian's Name, Address and Telephone Number:

\_\_\_\_\_

High School Attended or Attending: \_\_\_\_\_

College/University/Program Planning to Attend or Attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Point Average (High School): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Point Average (College or University): \_\_\_\_\_

Projected Graduation Date (High School): Projected \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Date (College or University): \_\_\_\_\_

What are your interests and hobbies? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Will it be possible for you to continue your advanced education without financial assistance?  
Explain briefly:

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List extracurricular activities in which you have participated, such as athletics, clubs, etc.; include any offices held:

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List any awards you have received or significant accomplishments during the past four (4) years:

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List community, civic, or church activities in which you participated:

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Name, address, and phone number of two (2) character references:

Please attach the following:

1. Official transcript of grades to substantiate at least a 3.0 (or “B”) average.
2. Your resume.
3. At least one reference letter from a teacher or someone who has known you for at least the past two (2) years.
4. An essay setting forth your reasons for having chosen the legal profession as a field of study. Please include the areas of law or the legal profession which most interests you at this time (minimum of 100 words).

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN THIS APPLICATION WITH REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS TO:

**Barbara Skeen, CP**  
**TAALP Scholarship Committee Chairman**  
**c/o Mewbourne Oil Company**  
**Tyler, Texas 75701**  
**(903) 534-7643 (Direct Line)**  
**Email: [bskeen@mewbourne.com](mailto:bskeen@mewbourne.com)**

**NOTE: Application Deadline: April 15, 2021**

**YOU MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL PAGES IF NECESSARY**

<p><b>APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER APRIL 15, 2021 WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.</b> <b>INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.</b></p>
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Process Service      Surveillance      Witness Locate

Michael J. Collins  
Private Investigator

**COLLINS**  
INVESTIGATIONS

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

903-526-1411  
FAX 903-526-6453  
[mikecollins@sprintmail.com](mailto:mikecollins@sprintmail.com)

Background Searches      Jury Research      Interviews

[mikecollins@sprintmail.com](mailto:mikecollins@sprintmail.com)

**BLUBONNET PROCESS SERVER**  
*Serving Tyler-Smith County & Longview-Gregg County  
& surrounding areas in East Texas*

Pamela "Blu" Daniels  
903-372-2818  
[blondefilly@wb4me.com](mailto:blondefilly@wb4me.com)

SCH4241  
Member TPSA, NAPPS and TAALP



### March Birthdays

Laney Pilcher 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Erin Blair 4<sup>th</sup>  
Carol Godwin 4<sup>th</sup>  
Christine Jones 6<sup>th</sup>  
Cayce Della Williams 21<sup>st</sup>  
Gabby Jones 25<sup>th</sup>  
Tina Knighton 26<sup>th</sup>  
Kimberly Carter 29<sup>th</sup>



**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**  
**DAIRY QUEEN!**



# SPOTLIGHT



Hello everyone, my name is Brenda Velasco. I am honored to be the “spotlight” in this newsletter. I was born in Mexico, but raised in Tyler Texas. I have two beautiful daughters. My oldest will be turning 7 this year and my baby will be 4 in May. My husband works at H.W Lochner in Tyler. He graduated from University of Texas at Tyler in 2017, with a Bachelor in Civil Engineering. I am currently studying at Tyler Junior College in the Paralegal program. I will be graduating in May 2021. Also, I am currently doing an internship at Biggs & Greenslade, P.C., Attorney at Law. I am learning insurance defense at the moment, and I have enjoyed every aspect if it. When I decided to go back to college, I knew from the start that I wanted to work in the legal field. A soon as I found out Tyler Junior College had a paralegal program, I knew I had to register for it. I have not regretted my decision, and I am very pleased with the program. I am currently waiting to finish my internship, and in the hopes to be given the opportunity to work for this awesome law firm. I am always eager to learn, and I love how TAALP is available for us to keep learning and succeeding in the legal field.





## **TAALP EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020-2021**

### **President**

LEATHA KOPECH, PP, PLS  
J. Scott Killough, PC  
4660 Kinsey Drive  
Tyler, Texas 75703  
903-561-8280  
[llkopech@gmail.com](mailto:llkopech@gmail.com)

### **Second Vice President**

TINA KNIGHTON, CP  
Court Administrator/Probate Auditor  
200 East Ferguson, Suite 100  
Tyler, Texas 75702  
903-590-4611  
[tknighton@smith-county.com](mailto:tknighton@smith-county.com)

### **Corresponding Secretary**

BRANDI TURCHI, CP  
Brown, Bauman & Smith, PC  
400 E. 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
Tyler, Texas 75701  
903-521-2820  
[brandit@brownbaumansmith.com](mailto:brandit@brownbaumansmith.com)

### **President-Elect**

JO RUTH HANCOCK, CP  
Wilson, Robertson & Cornelius, P.C.  
Mailing: 909 ESE Loop 323, Suite 400  
Tyler, Texas 75701  
(903) 509-5016 Direct  
(903) 509-5000 Main  
(903) 509-5091 Facsimile  
[jhancock@wilsonlaw.com](mailto:jhancock@wilsonlaw.com)

### **Executive Advisor**

CARRIE KING, CP, TBLS  
Fish & Richardson, PC  
1717 Main Street, Suite 5000  
Dallas, Texas 75201  
214-760-6109  
[cking@fr.com](mailto:cking@fr.com)

### **Treasurer**

LISA BETTS  
Starr, Schoenbrun & Comte, PLLC  
110 North College Avenue, Suite 1700  
Tyler, Texas 75702  
903-535-0200  
[lisa@sscfirm.com](mailto:lisa@sscfirm.com)

### **First Vice President**

MELISSA WALLACE, CP  
Burton Oil Service Operations, LLC  
102 North College Avenue, Suite 1023  
Tyler, Texas 75702  
903-360-0628  
[melissa.wallace@burtonoil.com](mailto:melissa.wallace@burtonoil.com)

### **Recording Secretary**

LAURA BROWNLOW  
Flowers Davis, PLLC  
1021 ESE Loop 323, Suite 200  
Tyler, Texas 75701  
903-534-8063  
[brownlow\\_laura@yahoo.com](mailto:brownlow_laura@yahoo.com)

### **Parliamentarian**

HELEN KOCH  
Brown, Bauman & Smith, PC  
400 E. 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
Tyler, Texas 75701  
903-530-8582  
[helenk@brownbaumansmith.com](mailto:helenk@brownbaumansmith.com)

Find us on:  and at [www.taalp.com](http://www.taalp.com)