

# THE VERDICT

DENTON COUNTY PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

JUNE 2011

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Vicki Schmidt, CLA



Dear members:

Our June DCPA meeting is the last Thursday of the month, June 30<sup>th</sup>. By tradition we do not have a guest speaker this month but instead we have a longer business meeting and hear committee reports. This is one of my favorite meetings of the year because I get to visit with you members for an extended period of time and catch up on everyone's activities.

We will get to hear in depth reports from each of the committees and some special reports regarding the plans for the TAPS seminar coming up this Fall.

Earlier this month I represented the paralegal profession at the Career Day seminar for middle school students at Hedrick Middle School in Lewisville. I was a little nervous about describing our profession to 11, 12, and 13 year olds, so I asked my 11-year old granddaughter for advice. Among other bits of pre-teen wisdom, I learned that Trinity believes that talking about work is "boring" and that when she asks me "how was work" I usually say something like "it was not too bad" or "it was the same as always." Therefore, she has concluded that being a paralegal is not much fun. I tried to correct her perception, but when the rules of confidentiality come into play, there isn't a lot we can talk about.

Despite this food for thought, I went online to the Paralegal Division web site and watched a half-hour CLE on being a paralegal and got some good ideas from that. I gave my presentation to three different groups of students and didn't get stoned or booed by any of them. Most of the groups

wanted to know what kind of education was required to be a paralegal and how much money could be earned. A few wanted to know what I liked best about the job – that was harder – how do you explain the supreme satisfaction you get from closing the file?

There were 33 speakers in all and the school did a very good job of organizing the event. I felt good that I could cite the U.S. Dept. of Labor report that stated that the demand for paralegal professionals is expected to grow 28% in the next ten years.

## 2011 DCPA OFFICERS

President – Vicki Schmidt

President Elect – Michelle Beecher

Secretary/Parliamentarian – Gloria Porter

Treasurer – Lisa Pittman

Historian – Ava Watson

## 2011 DCPA COMMITTEES

CLE Committee -

Michelle Beecher, Chairman  
Lisa Bowles  
Michelle James  
Christine Piott

Fund Raising Committee -

Jenna Earhart, Chairman  
Lisa Pittman  
Adriana Sanchez

Legal Directory Committee -

Ava Watson, Chairman  
Lisa Pittman

Gloria Porter  
Carol Pelzel  
Denise League  
Debbie Maldonado

Membership Committee -

Sunnie Palmer, Chairman  
Jennifer Harris  
Denise League  
Christine Piott  
Gina Elliott  
Michelle Merrit  
Miranda Miller  
Pamela Snavely

Newsletter Committee -

Lisa Pittman, Chairman  
Jennifer Earhart  
Jackie Cox

Social Committee -

Jennifer Flores – Chairman  
Barbara Denton  
Pam Snavely  
Landra Turner  
Amy Riggs

**DCPA WEBSITE**

Check out what's new on our website at [www.dentonparalegals.org](http://www.dentonparalegals.org). Let us know what you think, and what you would like to see on our website in the future. If you have any changes that need to be made to your contact information, please let us know.

**MEMBERSHIP**

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 Sunnie Palmer at [sunnie@zellmerlaw.com](mailto:sunnie@zellmerlaw.com) or (940) 383-2674.

**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
- ❖ Fulfillment that is received from being involved in the direction of the paralegal profession

**BIRTHDAYS**



Our members with July birthdays are:  
Gina Elliott (7-6);  
Janel Stoffels (7-7);  
Claudia Stapleton (7-14);  
Shirley Selbourne-Ramos (7-17);  
Jessica Cannon (7-29);

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

**MEETING NOTICE**

The Denton County Paralegal Association June Luncheon will be on Thursday, **June 30, 2011** at noon at Oakmont Country Club, 1901 Oakmont Drive, Corinth, Texas.

The all-inclusive cost of lunch is \$13.00 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.

**RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED and can be made via e-mail to [Vicki@cmloveless.com](mailto:Vicki@cmloveless.com). The Deadline for making your reservation is 5:00 P.M. on Monday, June 27, 2011.**

**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 Shores Rd/Post Oak Drive
- Turn west onto Post Oak Drive
- Turn right (west) onto Robinson Rd at stop sign
- Turn left (south) onto Oakmont Dr – you will see an Oakmont sign in the median

- Turn right into Oakmont Country Club (second right)



### AGENDA FOR JUNE MEETING

Date: Thursday, June 30, 2011

Place: Oakmont Country Club  
1901 Oakmont Drive  
Corinth, Texas 76210

Time: Noon

1. Welcome members and guests
2. Old Business  
Approve the May Minutes and  
Treasurer's report
3. Committee Reports
4. Door prizes and adjournment

### EVENTS/NEWS



Do you have a recipe, informative tip/idea, or joke, etc. that you would like to share with your fellow DCPA Members? If so, please submit your idea to Jenna Earhart at [jeahart@hbwvllaw.com](mailto:jeahart@hbwvllaw.com). Thank you!

### TAPS 2011

TAPS 2011 will be held October 5-7, 2011 at the Marriott Hotel (DFW) & Golf Resort. *See flyer attached.*

**PD Members:** Scholarships are available to attend TAPS if you need financial assistance. For information regarding TAPS visit the PD website: [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org)

### DCPA SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Deadline to submit your application for the DCPA Scholarship Award is September 15, 2011. Attached are the instructions and the application. This is a scholarship for paralegals sitting for the certification test such as TBLS, NALA, NFPA.

### DCPA FUNDRAISER ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE



Each year DCPA Members assist the Children's Advocacy Center of Denton County with school supplies to help those families that need it the most. All donations must be delivered to CACDC no later than August 5<sup>th</sup>.

Donations must be new/unused items **OR** monetary. You may deliver your donations to Jenna Earhart at Hayes, Berry, White & Vanzant, LLP, 512 W. Hickory, Suite 100, Denton, Texas 76201 **or** you may drop your donations off during our June and July monthly luncheon.

All monetary donations should be hand-delivered or mailed to Lisa Pittman's attention at PO Box 2641, Denton, Texas 76202, no later than August 1, 2011. Please make those checks payable to DCPA and mark those for CACDC school supply drive. Lisa Pittman and Jenna Earhart take all monetary donations and purchase the school supplies that are still needed before the August 5<sup>th</sup> deadline.

The CACDC School Supply Wish List is attached to this newsletter and you may also pick up a list at our June luncheon.

#### SILENT AUCTION



**Donation Sign Ups are now being accepted.** – We have received some emails with items willing to be donated – a huge **THANK YOU** to those who have done that already! We definitely need more participation to make this Silent Auction a success – remember the proceeds will benefit our Thanksgiving and Christmas families we assist with each year. Items we are looking for include: baked goods, plants, jewelry, skin care goodies, baby blankets, photography, monogrammed items, etc. If you do something as a hobby or a part-time job on the side or have a special talent in creating or making items - this is what we are looking for!

Please email Jenna Earhart, Fundraising Committee Chair, at [jeahart@hbwvllaw.com](mailto:jeahart@hbwvllaw.com) or call at (940) 387-3518, with your donation commitment. Deadline to turn in your donated item(s) is September 16, 2011.

contact Lisa Pittman at (940) 387-3518 or [lpittman@hbwvllaw.com](mailto:lpittman@hbwvllaw.com).



### **SUPPORT OUR SUSTAINING MEMBERS**

**Our Sustaining Members give so much to our Association, please be sure to think of them when you are in need of services that require their specialty!**

### **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Local law firm seeks experienced legal assistant in the areas of estate planning and probate. Litigation experience preferred but not required. Successful candidate must have strong organizational skills and be a self-starter. Salary competitive. Please respond via email to [assistantl@ymail.com](mailto:assistantl@ymail.com). (5/11)

Thriving family law practice with offices in Denton and Collin Counties has an opening for a legal assistant with 2 - 4 years experience in the Denton office beginning in June. Candidates should be proficient in the use of Word, ProDoc, and Outlook as well as have a good understanding of common family law practices. Professional attitude, enthusiasm, and the ability to work under pressure will be highly prized! Compensation will be based on experience. We offer a 401k, generous vacation, paid membership/support in appropriate legal associations, and a chance to shine! Please submit your resume and cover letter, or any questions, to [staffsolutions2011@gmail.com](mailto:staffsolutions2011@gmail.com). (5/11)

Established 12-attorney firm in Flower Mound, Texas with additional offices in Dallas and Houston. Specializing in representation of mortgage companies and banks regarding their lending activities in Texas in need of an experienced litigation paralegal. The right candidate should have significant experience in civil and commercial litigation (5 yrs at minimum, 10+ years preferred). The candidate would be responsible for managing cases and files, supporting 2 attorneys, drafting correspondence and pleadings, and preparing for depositions and trials if necessary. Great organization, writing, and communication skills are required. A positive-upbeat personality is preferred. The position comes with full benefits: 2 weeks vacation, full health insurance, 1 week sick leave, and paid holidays. The base pay is very competitive with midsize firms and is commensurate with experience. Send a resume, cover letter, and references to via email at [ah@bmandg.com](mailto:ah@bmandg.com). (6/20)

If you have an open position in your office or know of another office that has an opening and would like to e-mail it to the members and have it posted in the next newsletter, please

### **APRIL MINUTES**

1. President, Vicki Schmidt, called the meeting of May 26, 2011, to order at 12.10 p.m. at the Oakmont Country Club. Guests were recognized. There were 32 in attendance, which included 30 members, 1 guest, and the speaker, all of whom were welcomed by the President.
2. President Schmidt advised that the minutes from the April meeting were in the monthly newsletter and asked for a vote of approval. A motion for approval was presented by Sunnie Palmer and seconded by Christine Piott, and the motion carried by unanimous vote. President Schmidt then advised that the current Treasurer's Report was also in the newsletter and asked for a vote of approval. A motion for approval was presented by Ava Watson and seconded by Allison Johnston, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.
3. Legal Directory Chair, Ava Watson, announced that advance directory orders were being taken and encouraged all members to ask their firms to pre-order. It is the Committee's goal to publication costs of the directory with the funds received from advance orders without using DCPA funds. Ava also advised that she anticipated receiving a sample directory that she will share with the membership.
4. President Schmidt announced that Membership Chair, Sunnie Palmer, has membership certificates for new members and those that requested a new certificate.
5. CLE Committee Member, Michelle James, introduced the speaker, Blake P. Mitchell, PhD, Licensed Clinical Psychologist, who presented information on social studies and psychological evaluations.
6. Gina Elliott and Vicki Schmidt won the monthly drawing for the gifts presented by the Association.
7. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

