

July 2013

The Verdict

Special Interest Articles:

- School Supply Drive
- Legal Directory
- New Members
- Birthdays

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Denton County Paralegal Association

School Supply Drive - **School Starts Next Month!!**

This month to support our School Supply Drive endeavors, please bring to the luncheon **Kleenex** and **hand sanitizer**. We are also accepting spirals, notebook paper, composition books, pens and pencils, markers and colored pencils, folders, dividers, watercolors, rulers, crayons, glue and glue sticks!

Legal Directory – Advertiser Deadline

Note: To all DCPA members, please submit your legal directory prospective advertiser contacts including name, address, and/or phone number to Michele George or Jackie Cox, mgeorge@hbwvlaw.com or jcox@hbwvlaw.com no later than August 15th. The Committee is compiling a master list to send out letters and forms to the prospective advertisers for ad purchases in the Legal Directory.

2013 Officers

Ria Sherman, President
ria@cokerlegal.com

Kim Guertler, President-Elect
Kim.guertler@dentoncounty.com

Michelle James, Secretary/Parliamentarian
mljames1960@yahoo.com

Lisa Pittman, Treasurer
lpittman@hbwlaw.com

Jennifer Stout, Historian
Jennifer.stout@dentoncounty.com

Meeting Notice

The Denton County Paralegal Association's next Luncheon will be on Thursday, **July 25, 2013** at noon at Oakmont Country Club, 1901 Oakmont Drive, Corinth, Texas.

The all-inclusive cost of lunch is \$14.00 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 ria@cokerlegal.com. The Deadline for making your reservation is 5:00 P.M. on Monday, July 22, 2013.

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 Grove Road/Post Oak Drive
- Turn west onto Post Oak Drive
- Turn right (west) onto Robinson Road at stop sign
- Turn left (south) onto Oakmont Drive – you will see an Oakmont sign in the median
- Turn right into Oakmont Country Club (second right)

AGENDA FOR JULY MEETING

Date: July 25, 2013
Place: Oakmont Country Club
1901 Oakmont Drive
Corinth, Texas 76210
Time: Noon

1. Welcome members and guests
2. Old Business
 - a. Approve June minutes
 - b. Approve June treasurer's report
3. New Business
4. Speaker – Denton County District Clerk Sherri Adelstein
5. Adjournment

2013 Committee Chairs

CLE, Vicki Schmidt
Vicki@cmloveless.com

Fundraising, Michelle Beecher
mbeecher@dentonlaw.com

Legal Directory, Michele George
mgeorge@hbwlaw.com

Membership, Gina Elliot
gottigina@yahoo.com

Newsletter, Lisa Pittman
lpittman@hbwlaw.com

Social, Christy Powell
cpowell@csplaw.net

TAPA, Jennifer Stout
jennifer.stout@dentoncounty.com

Ad Hoc Scholarship, Georgya Rankin
georgya@cokerlaw.com

President's Message

By: Ria Sherman

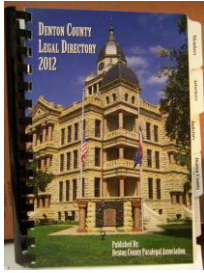
TexFile. What? That doesn't mean anything to you? It will! January 1st, 2014 the State of Texas will begin rolling out mandatory e-filing for all non-criminal Texas cases. Since Denton is one of the 10 most populous counties, we are in the first wave. This is not an optional participation kind of thing! We, as professional paralegals, must get on board now in order to assist our attorneys in meeting the challenges of this brave new world!

Some of you may have attended the DCBA luncheon earlier this month to listen to their CLE presentation on this topic. Aside from the changes that are coming, the standing room only crowd and the fact that the meeting went on for more than 2 hours, made quite an impression on me. Attorneys are worried and have lots of questions.

This is an opportunity to shine in the eyes of your employer! So, step 1, make sure you have signed up for our next two CLE luncheons. This month Sherri Adelstein will tell us about how Denton County will deal with mandatory e-filing and then, in August, Brian McGrath from Texfile will share the newest information. Step 2, check out www.TexFile.com to familiarize yourselves with the process and perhaps make a list of questions for our presenters. Step 3, mark your calendars with two dates: July 26th is the EFSP fair in the jury room at the Denton County Courthouse for firms looking for an e-filing service provide, and September 1st is the date the system should go online, still in a permissive environment, to give us a chance to try it out before the January launch.

Let's lead the way on this DCPA!





Legal Directory

The 2012 Legal Directory is available for purchase. This latest directory has been updated to include some of the newest attorneys in Denton County. The cost of the directory is \$25.00 each. If you have an old directory, turn it in for a \$2.00 rebate on the purchase price. This is a great resource! Get yours today! For more information contact Michele George or Lisa Pittman at (940) 387-3518 or at mgeorge@hbwwlaw.com or lpittman@hbwwlaw.com.

CLE Guest Speaker



Our Speaker this month is Honorable Sherri Adelstein, Denton County District Clerk, who will speak about "Mandatory E-filing in Denton County."

Birthdays

Our members with August birthdays are:

- Lakesha Bell (8/3)
- Landra Turner (8/3)
- Beverly Rezadad (8/7)
- Michael McNeil (8/12)
- Melody Brackeen (8/16)
- Michele George (8/22)
- Janene Koiner (8/23)

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

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

Membership News

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 Gina Gotti at gottigina@yahoo.com, (972) 436-7584.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Korina Adams**, Duane Coker & Associates, *Field Associate*
- Brandi Hunter**, The Law Office of Stephen Wohr, *Active*
- Ali Silva**, Holmes, Diggs & Eames, *Active*

Support Our Sustaining Members

Please help support our Sustaining Members by calling them when you have a project that needs outside support. Remember it is through their continued support and generosity that DCPA is able to provide social events at a low cost.

Stewart Process Service, Inc.

Bruce G. Stewart

110 Sheraton Place

Denton, Texas 76209

Phone: 940-367-4643

Fax: 940-484-0999

Email – stewartprocess@verizon.net

The Reporting Professionals

Cheryl K. Perlich

2925 Country Club Road, Suite 104

Denton, Texas 76210

Phone: 940-484-6053

Fax: 940-484-6054

Email – reportingpros@sbcglobal.net

Scholarship Information and Deadlines

Submitted by Georgya Rankin, Scholarship Committee Chair

First of all, the TBLS examination application deadline has been extended to July 15, 2013. The examination will be in November 9, 2013, in Austin, Texas. The specialty areas of law available for certification are: Bankruptcy, Civil Trial Law, Criminal Law, Estate Planning and Probate, Family Law, Personal Injury Trial Law and Real Estate Law. I highly encourage you to explore the possibility of becoming one of the state's elite paralegals by becoming board certified. For more information visit: <http://www.tbls.org/Cert/Paralegal.aspx> or call 855.277.TBLS(8257).

To help with this, DCPA has allotted a scholarship of \$250.00 to go towards a scholarship. The Application and instructions can be found <http://www.dentonparalegals.org/resources.html> **Please submit your application to the Scholarship committee by August 30th** so that they have to be forwarded to the Executive Committee no later than September 15th to be announced at the October meeting.

You may submit your application to any of the scholarship committee members Georgya Rankin at georgya@cokerlegal.com, Toya Brown at toya@cokerlgal.com or Christine Piott at cplawgirl@gmail.com. You will be reimbursed up to \$250.00 for fees and expenses paid for the exam.

Secondly, there are two TAPS scholarships one is through our local chapter, Denton Paralegal Association, and through the State Bar Paralegal Division.

For our local DCPA offers a \$250.00 scholarship to go towards the fees for TAPS. TAPS, this year, is October 2 through October 4th at the Omni Hotel in San Antonio. You won't want to miss the fun. Once again, you can go to our website to fill out the application. You may submit your application to any of the scholarship committee members Georgya Rankin at georgya@cokerlegal.com, Toya Brown at toya@cokerlgal.com or Christine Piott at cplawgirl@gmail.com.

Lastly, If you are a member of the State Bar Paralegal Division, don't forget to re-new your membership. You may renew your membership on line by going to their website <http://txpd.org/default.asp>

Employment Opportunity

Legal Secretary Position

We are seeking a professional, poised individual with at least one year of past professional office experience to join our team. The position is 35-40 hours per week and can be somewhat flexible for school or family schedules. Responsibilities include front desk, multi-line telephone, secretarial support for paralegals and attorneys, ordering supplies for two locations. The qualified candidate will possess strong customer service skills, be organized, reliable, team oriented, and able to multitask. A working knowledge of Outlook is preferred.

Paralegal Position.

Our office is expanding so we are seeking to add another paralegal to our family. The qualified candidate must have family law experience, excellent written and verbal communication skills, an ability to work independently and as a member of a team, be deadline oriented, experienced in drafting pleadings and other written materials, possess excellent client liaison skills, be polished in his/her presentation, be reliable, discreet, and professional. Training will be offered on our various systems, however a working knowledge of Outlook is preferred.

CokerLegal is a thriving family law firm with offices in Denton and Frisco. We offer competitive compensation, great bonus opportunities, 401k, and paid vacation time. We also have a work environment second to none! If you are interested in either of the two positions, please forward your resume and cover letter to ria@cokerlegal.com. (7/13)

Paralegal Position

Looking for experienced Family Law paralegal with some interest and/or experience in office administration. Flexible hours and flexible scheduling can be discussed. Please send resume via email to jill@oconnellfirm.com. (7/13)

In The Know

By Wanda Woodworth

Talking with: Carla Neal, Paralegal, Office of the General Counsel, Stonegate Senior Living, LLC

Years' experience: 8 years

What made you want to become a paralegal? After college, I worked as a Legal Secretary for 8 years at a law firm. Becoming a Paralegal seemed the obvious next step for me. I discovered that I was well-suited to the legal field and found it interesting, so I enrolled in a continuing education program at SMU and obtained my Certificate of Paralegal Studies. Later, I obtained paralegal certification through NALA.

What type of law did your attorney practice? Real Estate Law

What was it like being a new paralegal? It was a bit scary, but I had a few paralegal friends who were always willing to help me and answer my questions.

How many paralegals are at your current firm? There are two of us.

What kind of law is practiced at your current firm? I'm currently with the General Counsel's office at Stonegate. Stonegate manages skilled nursing and assisted living facilities, and the legal department does a little bit of everything. Much of my work is corporate in nature (filing documents with SOS offices, keeping track of numerous entities, etc.), but I also coordinate the facilities' responses to records requests and subpoenas, assist with discovery, real estate transactions, and help maintain a contract database. I also devote a significant amount of time to insurance and risk management matters.

What is your advice to new paralegals? Don't be afraid to ask questions. There are many attorneys and paralegals out there willing to help. Also, everyone makes mistakes, so don't get discouraged! Finally, always look before you leap (meaning always, but always, check your work!).

To which paralegal organizations do you belong? DCPA, Paralegal Division State Bar of Texas, and NTPA (North Texas Paralegal Association).

How do you relax after a tough day at work? When I get home I love to put on my comfy clothes and relax with my family.



Award of Excellence Recipient

Submitted by Pamela Snavelly, CP (PD District 12 Director 2012-2014)



Gloria Porter was honored with the Award of Excellence at the Paralegal Division's Annual Meeting that was held in June. "With Special Appreciation Above & Beyond Award 2012 – 2013" was inscribed on the award.

The Award of Excellence is an award conferred by the Board of Directors of the Paralegal Division to recognize an individual who has made a substantial contribution to the paralegal profession. The award is given for outstanding merit and is not required to be conferred annually.

Gloria received the award for her many years of service and commitment to the paralegal division, her dedication to the profession, and tireless efforts to promote the paralegal division. It was a well-deserved accolade in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the Paralegal Division and to the professional enhancement of paralegals in Texas.

Gloria started her legal career in 1980. She joined the Paralegal Division in 1989, known as the Legal Assistants Division at the time. She was an active member until the mid 90s, and rejoined the PD again in 2005.

In her tenure she has held the following positions:

District 12 Membership Sub-Committee Chair - 2005/2006

District 12 Public Relations Sub-Committee Chair - 2006/2007

District 12 Election Sub-Committee Chair - 2007/2008

District 12 Director - 2007/2009

Continuing Education Committee Online CLE Chair - 2008/2009 & 2009/2010

Elections Committee Chair - 2010/2011, 2011/2012 & 2012/2013

Pro Bono Definition Ad Hoc Committee Chair - 2011

TAPS Planning Committee Marketing Chair - 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011 & 2012

She has also been an active member of DCPA for many years and is one of the Charter Members (Greater Denton Legal Assistants Association – GDLAA). Gloria has served as a leader and mentor to many paralegals over the years and has set the bar high.

Congratulations, Gloria!

June Minutes

1. President Elect, Kim Guertler, called the business meeting of June 27, 2013, to order at 12:19 p.m. at the Oakmont Country Club. There were 13 attendees (13 members), all of whom were welcomed by President Elect Guertler.

OLD BUSINESS:

2. President Elect Guertler asked for a vote for the May 23, 2013, meeting minutes. A motion for approval was presented by Jennifer Stout, seconded by Michele George, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.
3. President Elect Guertler asked for a vote of approval for the May, 2013, Treasurer's report. Treasurer, Lisa Pittman, advised the membership that the Treasurer's report was revised due to a mathematical error related to the Bingo event vendors. A motion for approval was presented by Christy Powell, seconded by Jenna Earhart, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

NEW BUSINESS – BUSINESS MEETING (Quarterly Reports from Committees):

4. President Elect Guertler asked for committee reports and briefly commented on the Bingo Night fundraiser as a fun and innovative event.
5. Michele George (Chair of the Legal Directory Committee) gave her quarterly report for her committee. Michele also provided handouts related to the legal directory.
6. Gina Elliott (Chair of the Membership Committee) gave her quarterly report for her committee. There are currently 54 DCPA members. Gina discussed a trifold she was interested in creating for DCPA. There was some discussion regarding Wild Apricot that President Elect Guertler also informed the membership about.
7. Georgya Rankin (Chair of the Scholarship Committee) gave her quarterly report for her committee and advised that the deadline for the Paralegal Certification exam is September 15, 2013, and further advising that applications have to be in for TAPS.
8. Christy Powell (Chair of the DCPA Social Committee) gave her quarterly report for her committee and reported on the Bingo Night co-sponsored with the Fundraising Committee (Michelle Beecher, Chair). Christy Powell provided details about the event, including the funds budgeted, purchases made, the location donated, expenses, the vendors, food, supplies, and services donated, sales, funds sent to Friends of the Family, and prizes given to attendees. Christy advised that the Bingo Night fundraiser was overall a great success for DCPA.
9. Michelle James (CLE Committee member) gave the quarterly report for her committee in Chair, Vicki Schmidt's absence. Michelle advised of the upcoming CLE speakers and requested feedback from the membership as to topics they would like covered in the future.
10. Lisa Pittman (Chair of the Newsletter Committee) gave her quarterly report for her committee.
11. There being no further business, President Elect Guertler adjourned the meeting at 12:54 p. m.

Denton County Paralegals Association

PO Box 2641
Denton, TX 76206

Visit us on Facebook:

[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
Denton-County-Paralegal-
Association](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Denton-County-Paralegal-Association)

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.dentonparalegals.org

Treasurer's Report As of July 15, 2013

Balance 01/01/13 \$2,182.41

FIRST QUARTER 2013

CREDITS:

Dues	\$1,755.00
Valentine's Day Grams	1,765.00
Valentine's Day Donations	38.00
January Luncheon	251.00
February Luncheon	280.00
March Luncheon	294.00
CLE Registration Fees	245.00
School Supply Donations	100.00
Administration:	
TAPA Registration	40.00

DEBITS:

January Luncheon	266.04
February Luncheon	324.52
March Luncheon	358.68
Valentine's Day Gram Expenses	147.62
Administration:	
TAPA	180.00

SECOND QUARTER 2013

CREDITS:

Dues	85.00
May Luncheon	224.00
June Luncheon	112.00
CLE Registration	400.00
School Supply Donations	20.00
Bingo Night – Vendor Registration	350.00
Bingo Night – Sales: Cards & Daubers	417.50
Bingo Night – Deposit Refunded	500.00
Administration:	
TAPA	60.00

DEBITS:

May Luncheon	238.00
June Luncheon	140.04
CLE – Expenses	661.55
Bingo Night Expenses:	
Bingo Supplies	130.89
Deposit (Refundable)	500.00
Donation (Friends of the Family)	143.30
Fundraising – Expenses	71.92
Administration:	
Stamps	9.20
Website	129.60

BALANCE AS OF 7/15/13 \$5,817.55