

MALA MOMENTS

A PUBLICATION OF THE MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL ASSISTANTS* PARALEGALS AN AFFILIATE

JUNE 2017 EDITION

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Terry Hale, ACP

While it seemed like winter was never going to end, I'm now hopeful that the sunshine and warmth are here to stay for a while so get out there and enjoy the summer.

I would like to start my first newsletter out by thanking all of MALA's members for being a part of MALA and part of the legal community in Montana. I am humbled and honored to serve as MALA's President for the upcoming term. I also want to say it is my honor and pleasure to be able to serve alongside the other newly elected officers. These amazing leaders and I look forward to the new and exciting things this Board is going to do for MALA. Any my final thank you goes out to all those who were willing to serve on a committee this year. Without your help, MALA could not continue to grow or function, and I look forward to what the year brings with you all.

I'm excited to report the 2017-18 Seminar Committee has been hard at work on planning next year's Annual Meeting as well as putting together an awesome lineup for the upcoming monthly telephonic Brown Bag Seminars. MALA strives to promote the NALA Certified Paralegal program and this year is no exception as MALA will again be presenting the CP Review Course in September but here in Missoula.

This year's NALA Convention will be held in Orlando, Florida on July 19-21, 2017. Be sure to check out NALA's Convention Brochure at www.nala.org. It would be amazing to see more MALA members attend a NALA Convention. If you've never been, all I can say is NALA Conventions are like nothing you've ever attended. Convention is filled with 100's of vendors, top-notch speakers on a multitude of topics, networking opportunities galore, and of course, this year it's in Orlando, so there will be things to see and do when you're not busy at Convention. NALA has also announced the newly revised CP Exam which will go in effect 2018. Be sure to check it out on nala.org.

I wholeheartedly believe that MALA is "Our" Association and is only as good as its members! I hope you will all get involved with MALA: whether it is attending a monthly Brown Bag Seminar, attending our CP Review Course, talking to your fellow paralegals about joining MALA; running for a position on the Board; or serving on a committee. There are so many ways to get involved – you can even write an article for our quarterly newsletter. If there is a committee that interests you, it's not too late! Please let me or one of the other officers know and we'd love to get you involved. Getting involved with a committee is the best way to get to know other members and learn how the organization operates.

Remember: It's all about team work: **Together Everyone Achieves More!!!**

Please feel free to contact me any time should you have any ideas, suggestions, articles, or you just want to become more involved in MALA. I look forward to working with each and every one of you this coming year!



Terry Hale, ACP
President

10 Things for Paralegals to Consider If You Have to Take Over for Someone Who Is Leaving <http://www.my paralegal place.com/2011/12/10-things-for-paralegals-to-consider-if.html>

The purpose of this list is so that **none of the work that you have anything to do with falls between the cracks**. Don't look at this project as "why me?" Look at this task as CYA (Covering Your Ass) in the event his or her responsibilities somehow become your responsibility.



If it is within the parameters of your office policy and the laws of your State and the rules and regulations of your State Bar or the "Other Powers That Be." do the following with regard to the attorney or paralegal who is leaving the firm/company:

1. Get their user names and passwords to their firm/company email, Westlaw, Lexis/Nexis, and any sites, directories and databases they've used in connection with your firm's work. There nothing like being assigned a case after they leave and some pivotal information, e.g., "the smoking gun," is locked behind their password... and now they're in their new office... in India, and you can't reach them... and the trial is tomorrow. Need I go on?
2. Get their firm/company voicemail login information.
3. If you monitor the office voice messaging, remove their name and mailbox from the outgoing greeting so that their callers are forced to leave the message in the general voice mailbox or some other more appropriate place.
4. Check their incoming email, SPAM filter email and voice mail daily until these things have been re-routed or dismantled.
5. After they've completely moved out, check their office, desk drawers, shelves and computer "my docs" directory or the equivalent for outstanding case-related issues or dates they may have overlooked or forgotten to mention.
6. Check their docket or calendars, including desk blotter calendar, etc. to make sure discovery deadlines, witness prep appointments, trial prep dates, pleadings deadlines, depositions, client meetings, conference calls, closings, etc. are all now assigned to someone else or adjourned or dealt with in some effective way.



7. Before a deadline sneaks up on the firm, make sure it's clear to everyone: who's taking over what tasks, and make sure everyone knows their role, so that if there is something you need to be doing, you can get started doing it. You don't want the assignee's inattentiveness to become your crisis.

8. Sit down with the person who is leaving and make a list of their office duties. This is not for you to take them on, but often we don't realize people are quietly responsible for something that will fall into your clueless lap. If they monitor the daily legal publication, get a "101" while they are there. You want to be able to learn all you can while the person is still there, and it's still fresh in their mind.

9. Make sure you get their contact information, address, office phone, cell phone. The reason you want a personal email is because a work email may be a conflict of interest, especially if they going to an office that practices the same field of law. More than likely, you will be asking them something case-related, and you don't want this information to end up in their new firm's system. Of course, you will be using fictitious file names and code words to protect the interest of your clients, but, still, it's better to take precautions, even if it's just their personal email.

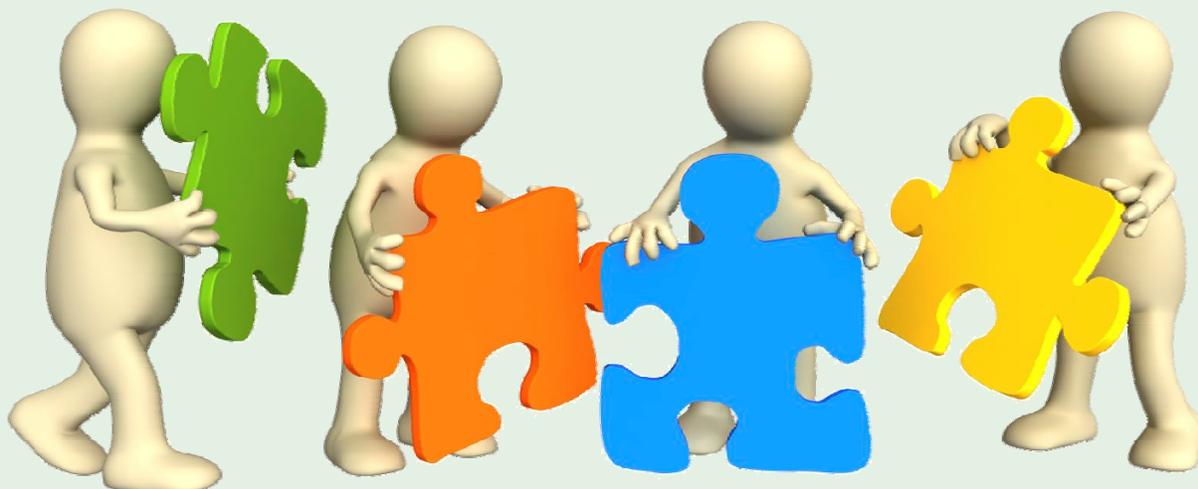
10. Get a list of all outstanding matters, despite the fact that you will conscientiously plumb the depths of their office and computer after they leave.

Bonus: 11. Type this up and store it somewhere b/c, I promise you, you will wish you had if you don't. It will reduce your stress later when you recall you have this information in the right place.

Note: There may be a manager in charge of this administrative stuff, but don't trust any work that you are responsible for to be handled with precision. These things that you need in order to do your job may not be on that managing person's "comprehensive" list. It's not personal, so don't worry about offending anyone for doing what everyone will hold over your head when this information is left in the ether and not dealt with. Heads may roll, and yours may be one of them, so avert the predicament anyway you can.

Warning: Check with your firm's managing partner to make sure doing any of this is copacetic BEFORE you do it! Don't simply check with the office manager, unless that person is a lawyer and is authorized to make such decisions.

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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Heather Bienvenue, CP

Our new Wild Apricot software has been a huge benefit when tracking our membership numbers. Currently, MALA has 113 active members. We have several members who have not paid or submitted their CLE reports for this year. I will be contacting them this week to see if they intend to continue with MALA.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new members:

- * Amanda Dunn
- * Joan Edmunds
- * Brenda Faure
- * Valerie Gubrich
- * Kelsey Godfrey (pending)
- * Marcy Hall
- * Megan Magstadt
- * Judith Martin
- * Angela Miller
- * Janet Robinson
- * Aliselina Strong
- * Tricia Welnel (pending)

Respectfully submitted

Heather Bienvenue, CP
Vice President



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Montana Association of Legal Assistants

5 Tips to Make You a More Efficient and Productive Paralegal

The Paralegal Resource

June 3, 2014 — 2,078 views

If you are a paralegal working in a busy law office, you know all too well one simple truth. There simply are not enough hours in the day to accomplish all of the tasks you have on your list! While we cannot exactly have a little talk with your boss about your workload, we can help you with a few time management and organization tricks.

Batch Tasks

You know the feeling of frustration that you get when you have to jump back and forth between a bunch of little tasks? It isn't just you - this is a universal occurrence that office workers suffer from. The reason is because it takes your brain a few minutes to process the task and you lose time in transition. Figure out a time in your day that will work for batching tasks. For instance, let it be known that you make and return phone calls twice a day, once at 8:30 a.m., and again at 3:30 p.m.

Limit Email

We all know that email is one of the biggest time sucks of them all. There is nothing you can do about opposing counsel and clients emailing you, but you can limit the amount of internal emails you send and receive by setting a work culture where people either walk into each other's offices to briefly talk, or they just pick up the telephone. Also, refrain from checking your email more than once every few hours.

Deal with Paper Once

When you are going through your mail and email, be ready to deal with things as you are reviewing them. File it, delete it, or take action. You are not managing your time effectively if you are reading your mail over and over again.

Keep a Task Checklist in Every File

This is something that no one thinks they have time to do, but if you fail to do this one simple little thing you are creating unnecessary headaches for everyone down the road. After you complete a task, just update your checklist of action items in the file so that anyone on your team can simply look at the file and easily ascertain what has already been done on the case, and what open items remain. You never want to waste an hour reviewing a file to figure out if someone has ordered records, or whether or not your client sent in updated documents. You need one master list that will reflect action items.

Limit Your Availability

Everyone wants to be friendly and accessible to their co-workers. After all, building relationships at work is critical to success. You can still be friendly and accessible, but let it be known that your designated times are the first fifteen minutes in the morning, and the last thirty minutes in the evening. The easiest way to be brilliant at work is to have the quiet time to think and be productive without interruption.

If you put these five tips to use, your work life should become more manageable. Paralegals in particular have to be time management and organizational ninjas. By being mindful of how you communicate with others and batching your tasks, you may be surprised at just how much more time you have!

Reprinted with permission of *The Paralegal Resource*, the article originally appeared in the June 3, 2014 *The Paralegal Resource*. The article is reprinted here in its entirety.



Proposed ByLaw Changes

Please submit your Proxy sheets so there is a quorum for voting on the proposed changes



BYLAWS OF THE MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL ASSISTANTS*PARALEGALS

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this association shall be Montana Association of Legal Assistants*Paralegals (hereinafter "MALA"). This association shall be affiliated with the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. (hereinafter "NALA").

ARTICLE II. OBJECTS & PURPOSES

- 2.1 To establish good fellowship among association members, NALA, and members of the legal community.
- 2.2 To encourage a high order of ethical and professional attainment.
- 2.3 To further education among members of the profession.
- 2.4 To cooperate with bar associations.
- 2.5 To support and carry out the programs, purposes, aims and goals of NALA.

ARTICLE III. POLICY

MALA shall be nonsectarian, nonpartisan, nonprofit, and nonunion. No actions or programs may be initiated or undertaken (now or in the future) in conflict with the bylaws or policies of NALA.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

Membership in MALA shall be based on requirements approved by MALA members.

There shall be two membership categories:

(1) Legal assistants/paralegals working under the direct supervision of an attorney, attorneys, or paralegal educators; persons acting, or who have acted in the past, in a legal assistant/paralegal capacity; and

(2) Students who are enrolled in good standing in any university, college, junior college, or other approved program pursuing a course of study as a legal assistant or paralegal; and graduates of legal assistant/paralegal programs who have not obtained their first employment in the legal assistant/paralegal profession and/or have not completed one calendar year in said employment. After the student successfully completes his/her education, he/ she may renew as a regular member during the membership renewal period as long as he/she meets all the requirements to gain regular membership.

Student members shall not be allowed to hold office and shall not be appointed to an office. A student member may serve on a committee, but shall not be chairperson of said committee.

Members of the two membership categories shall hereinafter be referred to as "members."

~~MALA's fiscal year shall be changed from September 1 to August 31 to April 1 to March 31.~~

~~During the interim period before converting to the new fiscal year (September 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013), each member must complete five (5) credit hours of continuing legal education. For each fiscal year after April 1, 2013, each member must complete ten (10) credit hours of continuing legal education.~~

With the exception of first-year members, each member must ~~also~~ complete at least three (3) credit hours of legal ethics within a three (3)-year period of their membership and every three (3) years thereafter.

Each member must present proof of the required credit hours of continuing legal education and ethics attained during the last fiscal year ~~(April 1 to March 31)~~ to the Membership Committee.

~~If any member fails to provide proof of completion of the required credit hours during fiscal year September 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013, he/she is not in compliance with MALA's bylaws and will have a three (3)-month grace period (until July 1, 2013) to complete the required credit hours. If proof of compliance is not provided prior to July 1, 2013, the individual will be notified that he/she no longer qualifies for MALA membership.~~

If any member fails to provide proof of completion of the required credit hours during ~~the prior fiscal year April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014 (and each fiscal year thereafter)~~, he/she is not in compliance with MALA's bylaws and will have a three (3)-month grace period (until July 1 of that fiscal year) to complete the required credit hours. If proof of compliance is not provided prior to July 1 of that fiscal year, the individual will be notified that he/she no longer qualifies for MALA membership.

Any former member whose ~~se MALA membership was revoked~~ ~~was dropped~~ for failure to comply with the continuing education requirements listed above must provide proof of completion of said requirements before he/she can reapply for membership.

First-year members are given a grace period to meet this continuing education requirement that extends one (1) year from the date of their acceptance for membership and from that date until the beginning of MALA's next fiscal year (April 1).

~~First-year members who join MALA between April 1, 2012 and August 31, 2012 have~~

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~~until March 31, 2014 to complete the required ten (10) credit hours of continuing legal education.~~

~~First year members who joined MALA from September 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013 have until March 31, 2014 to complete the required five (5) credit hours of continuing legal education.~~

ARTICLE V. APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Application for membership to MALA shall be submitted on forms approved by MALA members. The forms should clearly state that MALA is affiliated with NALA and that all MALA members are bound by the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility and any code adopted by MALA. Approval of membership shall be noted on the forms in accordance with standing rules adopted by this association.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

MALA shall meet at no less than quarterly intervals which may include attendance at association-sponsored seminars or workshops. Notice of quarterly business meetings shall be in writing to all members of record at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting. One-fourth (1/4) of the membership of this association shall constitute a quorum.

Special meetings may be called by the President upon five (5) days notice to all members of record.

Annual programs shall be held prior to the end of the association's fiscal year (see Article XIV Fiscal Year) for the purpose of electing officers, hearing reports of officers and chairpersons, electing a NALA Liaison, and adopting a budget for the ensuing fiscal year. Notice of annual meeting shall be in writing to all members of record at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting. Notice will also contain the slate of officers.

ARTICLE VII. CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

It is required that this association hold a minimum of four (4) educational events or a total of ten (10) hours of education during each fiscal year in order to maintain affiliation with NALA. These programs may be held in conjunction with a regular meeting of the membership.

It is required that this association hold a minimum of two (2) educational events that include at least three (3) hours of legal ethics every three (3)-year period. These programs may be held in connection with the educational events in the previous paragraph or in connection with a regular meeting of the membership.

ARTICLE VIII. PROXY VOTING

At any MALA membership meeting, any active member shall have the right to

vote either in person or by individual proxy. A member may appoint another member and one alternative as proxy by an appropriate written designation and proxy. Any such individual proxy shall be valid only for that single meeting for which it shall have been given and not otherwise.

No person shall solicit any proxies and proxies obtained by such solicitation may not be used at any membership meeting nor shall the same be accepted by the Parliamentarian (or in the absence of the Parliamentarian, by a member of the MALA Executive Committee).

Any individual proxy shall be deemed filed by a member with the Parliamentarian (or in the absence of the Parliamentarian, by a member of the Executive Committee) prior to the start of the meeting. Proxies may be delivered to the proxy holder, alternative proxy holder, Parliamentarian, or other Executive Committee member via e-mail, facsimile, or other electronic means.

ARTICLE IX. DUES AND ASSESSMENTS

The annual dues for members shall be proposed by the MALA Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall submit changes to in the annual dues to the MALA members for approval.

The dues of this association shall be Twenty-five and No/100 Dollars (\$25.00) per year. Dues for membership renewal must be submitted by, ~~due~~ April 1 (the beginning of MALA's fiscal year). Members are allowed a one (1) month grace period to pay their dues. If a member fails to pay dues by May 1, the individual will be notified that he/she does not qualify for MALA membership. If an individual who forfeits membership by not paying dues submits payment of said dues between May 1 and March 31 of that fiscal year, he/she will not be required to submit a formal application for MALA membership. If an individual does not pay dues for one fiscal year (April 1 to March 31), he/she will be required to submit a formal application to renew their MALA membership of each year and delinquent May 1.

~~-Dues shall not be prorated.~~

~~The annual dues for members shall be proposed by the MALA Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall submit changes in the annual dues to the MALA members for approval.~~

ARTICLE X. OFFICERS, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND CHAIRPERSONS

The elected officers shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and NALA Liaison.

The appointed officers shall be Parliamentarian and Montana State Bar Paralegal Association Liaison.

The Executive Committee shall be composed of elected and appointed officers. The Executive Committee shall act as a planning committee bringing recommendations to the membership for a vote. This committee shall meet at least quarterly and at other times as called by the President.

Terms of office shall be one (1) year. Successive terms shall be limited to one (1) year.

No officer or member shall be compensated for association duties. However, upon majority vote of the membership, persons may be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses in connection with association-related activities, provided the expenses ~~were been~~ authorized to be expended.

ARTICLE XI. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MALA members shall be invited to volunteer to serve on the Nominations and Elections Committee. ~~The~~ President shall appoint a ~~nominations and elections chairperson for this committee chairperson~~ at least sixty (60) ~~thirty (30)~~ days prior to the annual meeting of the association to present a slate of officers to the membership fifteen (15) days prior to election at the annual meeting.

No name shall be on the slate without consent of the candidate. Nominations from the floor will not be accepted at election. Election shall be by majority vote of members present voting in person or by proxy.

Voting for officers shall be by ballot at the annual meeting except when there is only but one candidate for any office. In that event, if there is no objection, the Chair may declare the candidate elected. A minimum of two (2) members of the Nominations and Election Committee shall serve as tellers to ~~Prior to the submission of the ballot at the annual meeting, the President shall appoint two (2) tellers for the purpose of tally tallying~~ the votes, including all ballots voted by proxy. If there are not at least two members on the Nominations and Election Committee, the President shall appoint two MALA members to serve as tellers. The tellers shall verify the results to the Chair who shall announce the results to the membership. In the event of a tie, the voting members shall immediately proceed to vote by ballot to dissolve such tie.

No member shall hold more than one elected or appointed office during the fiscal year.

Names of appointed officers must be presented by the President to the membership by the first meeting of the new fiscal year.

Names of newly elected or appointed officers shall be submitted to NALA headquarters and the Affiliated Associations Director as least thirty (30) days after election and/or appointment.

In the event MALA has more than one (1) class of membership, only full voting members may hold office.

First-year members are eligible for nomination or appointment to a position on MALA's Executive Board.

Student members shall not be allowed to hold office and shall not be appointed to an office. A student member may serve on a committee, but shall not be chairperson of said committee.

Unexpired terms of office shall be filled by appointment by the Executive Committee.

Any officer (elected or appointed) absent from three (3) consecutive meetings without good cause, may be removed from the office by the Executive Committee.

Upon an officer's death, resignation, removal or inability to act, the President shall appoint an individual to fill the position, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. Said officer shall hold such office for the remaining term of the office until such time as a successor is duly elected at the next annual meeting of the membership.

**ARTICLE XII.
STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON**

The President shall appoint a chairperson to the following standing committees:

Advertising Committee
[Attorney Contact Update](#)
Audit Committee
Bylaws Committee
[Community Outreach Committee](#)
Membership Committee
[Mentoring Committee](#)
Newsletter (comprised of one editor or a committee)
Nominations & Election Committee
Professional Development Committee
Standing Seminar Committee
Student Liaison Committee

[One](#) MALA member volunteers will be responsible for each of the following duties:

Job Bank
Legislature Monitoring
MALA Library
Webmaster

The Audit Committee will be composed of a past [MALA](#) treasurer and two (2) members selected by the chairperson. ~~This committee will -whose purpose is to~~ audit the Treasurer's books at the close of the fiscal year prior to the transfer of accounts to the newly elected Treasurer. In the event the incumbent Treasurer is elected to a second term, the audit will be performed following the annual meeting and prior to the first regular meeting of the membership.

Special committee chairpersons may be appointed by the President, as needed, with the approval of the membership.

**ARTICLE XIII.
DUTIES OF ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS AND
CHAIRPERSONS**

The MALA Executive Committee shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, NALA Liaison, Montana State Bar Paralegal Section Liaison, and Parliamentarian. The President shall appoint the Parliamentarian, Montana State Bar Paralegal Association Liaison, and special and standing committee chairpersons as provided in these bylaws.

President: The President shall preside over all Executive Committee meetings and membership meetings. The President shall pass files to successor immediately upon installation and shall cause all other officer's and chairpersons' files to be passed to respective successors.

The President shall be ex- officio (non-voting) member of all committees except the committee on nominations and elections.

This officer shall automatically be chairperson of the Standing Seminar Committee. This committee is responsible for planning MALA seminars and workshops and working with NALA in co-sponsorship of any programs. The President shall be responsible for fulfilling the educational requirements under Article VI of these bylaws and shall report such educational meetings to the NALA Liaison.

[The President shall submit a report summarizing MALA activities to MALA's newsletter editor for publication in the quarterly newsletter.](#)

Vice President: The Vice President shall preside and shall assume all duties assigned to the President in the President's absence.

The Vice President shall serve as chair of the Membership Committee and shall be charged with developing programs to encourage membership in MALA. This officer shall receive applications for membership and shall, in conjunction with the Membership Committee, review applications for membership, and accept or reject said applications based on requirements set forth in MALA's bylaws.

The Vice President shall determine if MALA members have met membership renewal requirements as set forth in Article IV of MALA's bylaws and shall notify said members if they are not in compliance.

The Vice President shall maintain a current roster of membership.

The Vice President shall work with the NALA Liaison to encourage membership in NALA.

This officer shall also work with the MALA Student Liaison Committee to explain the benefits of MALA membership to paralegal students and encourage membership in MALA.

The Vice President will be responsible for MALA's Mentoring Program and encourage new members to participate in this program.

[The Vice President shall submit a report of the number of current and pending members to MALA's newsletter editor for publication in the quarterly newsletter.](#)

Secretary: The Secretary shall be responsible for taking minutes of all meetings, keeping permanent minutes, and submitting minutes approved by the Executive Committee and MALA membership to MALA's Webmaster for publication on MALA's website [and MALA's newsletter editor for publication in the quarterly newsletter](#). The Secretary shall provide minutes of MALA's meetings to the NALA Affiliated Associations Director upon request.

This officer shall assist the President in preparing meeting agendas, notifying members of upcoming meetings, and assisting in other areas at the President's request.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall deposit all funds and make all disbursements, in a timely manner, subject to approval of the Executive Committee and as provided in the budget. Any extraordinary expenses must be approved by the membership before obligation to pay.

The Treasurer shall work with the Executive Committee to prepare a proposed budget for the ensuing fiscal year. This proposed budget shall be presented to the membership for approval at the annual meeting.

The Treasurer may be bonded (premium paid by association). All disbursements of association funds must be by association check, signed by the Treasurer and/or the President. However, the Treasurer or President are not to sign any association check that is made payable to him/her as payee.

This officer shall submit a written financial report at each regular meeting to be attached to official minutes as part of permanent record. The Treasurer is responsible for providing an annual report on MALA membership to NALA Affiliated Associations Director and submitting the fee required to continue MALA's affiliation with NALA. [The Treasurer will submit a report of account balances/expenditures to MALA's newsletter editor for publication in the quarterly newsletter.](#)

NALA Liaison: This officer shall have completed at least one (1) full term as a MALA President, Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer within the past five (5) years. MALA shall pay for the NALA Liaison's membership in NALA during the fiscal year of the NALA Liaison's term in office.

This officer shall be the main contact between NALA and MALA.

This officer shall be familiar with the NALA Bylaws and Standing Rules.

This officer shall:

- Represent MALA at the NALA annual convention of affiliated associations;
- Submit items that MALA wishes discussed at NALA annual meetings to the NALA Affiliated Associations Director;
- Participate in discussion sessions at NALA annual meetings;
- Provide a biannual report on MALA activities to the NALA Affiliated Associations Director on forms provided by NALA headquarters; and
- Submit names of newly elected or appointed officers to NALA headquarters and the Affiliated Associations Director as least thirty (30) days after election and/or appointment.

The NALA Liaison shall attend the NALA annual convention and prepare a report on what transpired at the convention. This report may be presented at MALA's annual meeting, published in MALA's newsletter, or posted on MALA's website.

Parliamentarian: The Parliamentarian shall attend MALA Executive Committee meetings and membership meetings and give opinions on parliamentary procedures upon request of the President. This officer shall be familiar with MALA bylaws, and NALA bylaws.

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall serve as parliamentary authority for items not covered by these bylaws or the association standing rules.

Montana State Bar Paralegal Association Liaison: This individual shall apply for membership to the Montana Paralegal Section of the Montana State Bar and said membership fee shall be paid by MALA. The Liaison shall attend Paralegal Section meetings and shall report Paralegal Section activities to MALA members.

ARTICLE XIV.

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office may appeal orally to a special ethics committee consisting of five (5) members nominated by the association members. A majority vote of this special ethics committee will be binding.

ARTICLE XVII.
AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Bylaw amendments (not in conflict with NALA bylaws) may be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) of members present at any regular meeting. The NALA Affiliated Associations Director must be advised of any amendments within sixty (60) days of passage.

Any member may submit a proposed amendment to the Bylaws Committee by delivering the proposed resolution in written form to the Secretary of the association. Amendments submitted by the membership shall be considered by the Bylaws Committee who shall recommend for or against the adoption of the amendment to the Executive Committee for membership approval.

The Bylaws Committee shall cause any proposed amendment(s) to be published in the official publication of the association together with the notice of the next regular business meeting or annual meeting or otherwise included in a notice forwarded to the membership prior to approval of any amendments.

ARTICLE XIX.
DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution of this association, all property and assets shall be distributed to a nonprofit charitable organization as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, to be selected by a majority vote of the remaining members of the association, notice having been given to members of the association and the NALA Affiliated Associations Director at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting. In no event shall any of such property and assets be distributed to any member or private individual.

In the event of a vote of dissolution, a quorum shall consist of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members of the association.

ARTICLE XX.
RETENTION OF AFFILIATION

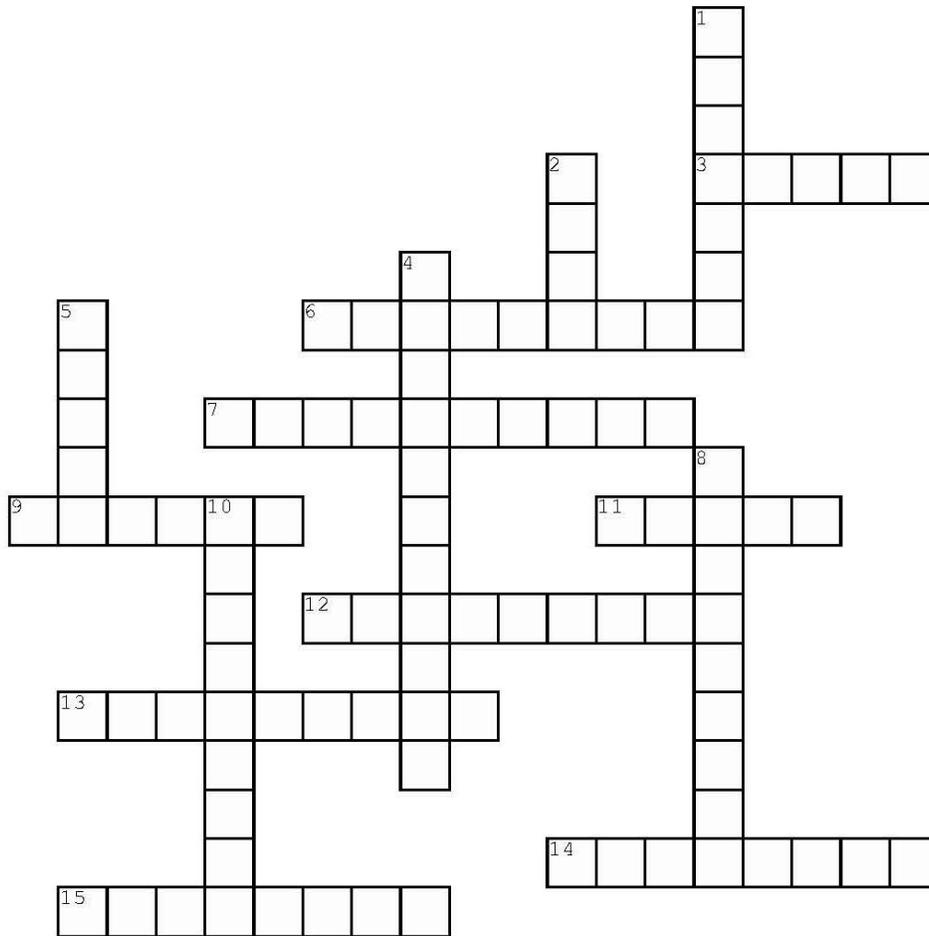
Affiliation with NALA is renewable each year by payment of an affiliation fee and attached to a current membership roster. In the event of suspension of affiliation, this association may reaffiliate with NALA by submitting a new application with membership roster, bylaws, sample of educational programs, petition and current initial fee.

In addition to the renewal fee, this association must comply with the required reports and requested procedures as outlined in these bylaws.

The annual renewal fee is payable on October 1 each year and delinquent as of November 1. Payment received after due date must be accompanied by a late fee established by NALA.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Legal Terminology



Created with TheTeachersCorner.net [Crossword Puzzle Generator](http://TheTeachersCorner.net/Crossword-Puzzle-Generator)

Across

- 3.** the act of stealing
- 6.** a forejudgment ;bias; partiality; preconceived opinion
- 7.** characterictis or disabilities which render a witness legally fit and qualified to give testimony
- 9.** as a legal term, refers to the strict legal rights of the parties
- 11.** as if; almost as it were; analogous to
- 12.** a spark; a remaining particle; a trifle; the least particle
- 13.** in an unreasonable manner, as fixed or done capriciously or at pleasure
- 14.** an action whereby the onwers or person entitled to repossession of goods or chattels may recover from another
- 15.** right of use over the property of another

Down

- 1.** one who has made a will; one who dies leaving a will
- 2.** null; ineffectual; nugatory; having no legal force or binding effect
- 4.** one who benefits from act of another
- 5.** place in which the suit is brought
- 8.** person with legal skills, but who is not an attorney
- 10.** to put an end to; to make to cease; to end



ELECTED OFFICERS

2017-2018



President:

Terry Hale, ACP, is a Criminal Investigator with the State of Montana Public Defender's Office in Missoula, Montana who has over 23 years of legal experience in Criminal Law, Employment Law, Insurance Defense, Medical Malpractice, Personal Injury, Family Law and Civil Litigation. She received her AAS Degree in paralegal studies in 1996, and her BAS in Sociology with an emphasis in Criminology in 2014. She received her CLA/CP designation in 2006, her ACP designation in Trial Practice in 2007 and her ACP designation in Criminal Litigation in 2015. Ms. Hale has been a member of MALA since 1996 where she is the 2017-18 President and has served in the past as President, Vice-President, NALA Liaison, and on all committees. Ms. Hale has been a member of NALA since 2002 where she served on the NALA Board of Directors as Region 8 Director from 2009-13, NALA's 2006-07 CEC Committee and as the 2007-08 Chair of NALA Campus LIVE! She serves as a member of the UM-Missoula Paralegal Advisory Board. Ms. Hale received recognition over the years for her professional accomplishments including the NALA Making a Difference Recognition, a NALA Affiliate Award, and a West Educational Publishing Award. She was an adjunct faculty member of the University of Montana COT where she taught Law Office Management and classes on writing resumes, cover letters and professional portfolios. Ms. Hale has been a speaker for MALA, NALA, the State Bar of Montana, and other paralegal organizations on a variety of topics including judgment and analytical ability, communications, team building and leadership, civil litigation, ethics, trial preparation, cover letters, resumes and professional portfolios and stress management. She is a published author in NALA's magazines *Facts & Findings* and *Career Chronicle*. Ms. Hale is recently married to her best friend, Steve, and loves spending time with her two adult children and their spouses, her two minor children, her three beautiful granddaughters, and two handsome grandsons. She loves baking, gardening, and spending time outside.





Vice President:

Heather Bienvenue, CP, is a paralegal and Office Manager for the Bozeman City Attorney's office. She has been a member of MALA for nine years. With twelve years of legal experience, Heather is always looking for ways to refine her skills and develop her legal knowledge. Ms. Bienvenue obtained her CP designation in 2012 from the National Association of Legal Assistants. She has a degree in English literature and secondary education. Heather has been married for 17 years to Bill Flanagan. They have two active boys ages 14 and 19. Most of the winter is spent watching the boys play hockey all over Montana. They also enjoy spending time with their families at Swan Lake and Hobson. When time allows, Heather enjoys reading, writing, and watching movies. She has completed the Portland Marathon for the second time and looks forward to competing in more events.



Secretary:

Michelle Harelson has been a MALA member and a member of the Montana State Bar for the past three years. Michelle graduated with her Bachelor of Arts in Paralegal Studies with a minor in psychology in December of 2005. Michelle has seven years of experience as a legal assistant/ paralegal. She has worked for solo attorneys, small firms including Falcon, Lester & Schaff and a large firm, Sullivan, Tabaracci & Rhoades. Michelle currently works as legal assistant to Craig R. Buehler at Buehler Law Office in Lewistown, Montana.

Experience areas include: family law, appeals, personal injury, civil litigation, collection, property law, estate planning, probate, guardianships, criminal defense, and commitments. Michelle volunteered for the Montana Crisis Hotline as a crisis hotline telephone volunteer, helping people with all types of crises. Michelle worked as a domestic violence advocate at Mercy Home in Great Falls during college, helping many women and children in a 24-hour domestic violence shelter. Michelle was trained for sexual assault advocacy, suicide prevention and intervention, domestic violence advocacy, and as a community resource referral specialist. Michelle has two children, a 20 year old son and a 4 year old daughter. She enjoys reading books, and the great outdoors, with camping, fishing, and snowmobiling to name a few things. Michelle loves playing with her daughter daily. Michelle has recently started a cottage kitchen chocolate business, which specializes in truffles, chocolate modeling clay/sugar paste, and boxes made of chocolates.



Treasurer:

Stephanie Spokas attended the University of Great Falls and received a degree of paralegal studies in 1990. Stephanie moved to Helena in 1994 and has remained in Helena since, providing paralegal support in State government and healthcare for the last 22 years. Stephanie is a freelance paralegal with Big Sky Litigation Support, LLC providing litigation support to local attorneys, and has worked in State government and the health insurance industry. Stephanie's experience has focused on litigation support, discovery management, and trial support. Stephanie has experience in the areas of class action litigation, income tax, property tax, liquor law, bankruptcy, health care law, constitutional law, and collections. Stephanie has participated in legal proceedings before State administrative agencies, and in the state and federal courts. She is a member of the Paralegal Section of the Montana State Bar, NALA, MALA, and Women's Leadership Network Helena. When not in the office, Stephanie enjoys spending time with her husband, son and daughter. Her hobbies include activities such as fishing, both salt water and fresh water, hunting, boating, skiing, and gardening. Stephanie is also an avid quilter, a gourmet cook and enjoys traveling and volunteer work.



NALA Liaison:

Barbara Hartzell, ACP Barbara is a paralegal at the law firm of Worden Thane in Missoula and has worked there for over 20 years. She specializes in civil litigation with a passion for trial work. Barbara is the current NALA Liaison. Barbara is a long time member of MALA and has served on the Board in various positions. She is also a member of NALA, serves on the Paralegal Advisory Committee Board at the University of Montana, and she is the Secretary for the Paralegal Section for the State Bar of Montana. Barbara earned her Certified Paralegal designation from NALA in 2009 and earned her ACP in E-discovery in 2017. She is a longtime resident of Stevensville. She loves to hike, travel and fills whatever down time she has with her three handsome grandsons.



What are your goals?

By Terry Hale, ACP

What makes you at the top of your game? Is it having a positive attitude and the desire to keep moving forward? These questions got me thinking, so I thought it would be a good idea to share some of my suggestions to achieve your goals, both personally and professionally. Whatever path you want to take in your career, the key is to find what works best for you and do it.

Be proactive at work. Let the powers that be get to know you and your capabilities. Monitor calendars and remind co-workers, team members, attorneys verbally or with friendly reminder e-mail that deadlines are approaching.

Be hands-on in the management of your assigned cases. Follow up with projects and do what needs to be done without being told.

Keep lists. Use a binder or Outlook contacts to create and maintain up-to-date checklist for common tasks or new tasks that you learn – so you can recall the necessary steps when called on to perform the task again.

Go beyond your abilities. Never stop learning. MALA offers Continuing Legal Education seminars throughout the year as does NALA, State Bar, and other paralegal education companies.

Find an area of law that interests you and become the office expert or “guru”. Take a class at a University, or do a self-study CLE.

Avoid complacency. Aspire to be better and complete projects for efficiently. There is always room for improvement or refining your skills and work procedures.

Treat everyone around you the way you want to be treated. As they say, it is easier to attract bees with honey. Working in the legal field can be stressful at times. Do your best to avoid adding to your own stress and to the stress of those around you.

Keep up to date on what is happening in your profession and your law community. Join a paralegal association, find paralegal blogs, read periodicals and visit bar association websites.

Present at a seminar or conference. No better way to acquire more knowledge than to research a topic you already know and present it at a seminar.

Embrace technology, don't run from it. Remember technology is now and it is not going anywhere but into the future. New skills may make your job easier and increase your productivity.

Join the board or committee of your local paralegal association and get involved. This lets you network with other paralegals as well as learn leadership skills that can transfer over to your job.

Set up an online profile so you will have personal resume on the web and make connections. LinkedIn is very popular.

Read paralegal magazines, blogs and newsletters to keep up-to-date on both the local and national level.

Take the CP Exam. Five reasons to take the CP Exam: 1. Increase your marketability; 2. The credential is nationally accredited and recognized; 3. Higher billing rate; 4. Accepted in place of Bachelor's Degree; and, 5. Personal satisfaction.

There are many ways to move your career in the right direction. Step out of your comfort zone and find one or two that work for you. You don't have to do them all at once. Set your goals and build on them until you find the key to your success.

MEETING MINUTES

March 24, 2017

MALA ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING & ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Friday, March 24, 2017 – 12:00 PM

Radisson Colonial Hotel

Helena, MT

Officers:

President - Jaime Burkhalter (Resigned)

Vice President - Terry Hale, ACP (also acting President)

Secretary – Michelle Harelson

Treasurer – Adria Kassion

NALA Liaison – Barbara Hartzell, ACP

Montana State Bar Liaison – Olga Bobko

Officers in attendance include: Terry Hale, ACP as Acting President and Vice President, Michelle Harelson as Secretary, Adria Kassion as Treasurer, and Barbara Hartzell, ACP as NALA Liaison. Olga was unable to be present today. Parliamentarian, Heather Bienvenue, CP is also in attendance. Everyone has signed in and voted. The Committee sheet is around.

1. Call to Order at 12:04 by Terry Hale, ACP, Vice President and acting President. Jaime Burkhalter has resigned due to health issues and Terry has taken over the role of Acting President during the interim.

Welcome to MALA's 25th Annual Meeting. MALA is celebrating 25 years. In 1992 MALA was founded with 15 members. Terry has contacted the Governor in the past, and none would sign an acknowledgement before. Steve Bullock has written a letter to recognize Paralegals' Week in Montana for the week of March 19-25, 2017.

MALA 2017-2018 Committee Sign-up Sheet. Terry made a short announcement that the Committee Sign-up sheet is being passed to all members. We would like to see volunteers who want to get involved and use their strengths. We need volunteers for Advertising in the newsletter and encourage that the MALA website will list them as a sponsor too. Duties include putting the newsletter together, gather articles, etc. We also need active volunteers for the Audit committee, community outreach, etc. Professional Development – we would like to increase the focus on that this year.

Acknowledgment of Sponsors. Terry read off and acknowledged all of our sponsors for the annual meeting and the donors and those who donated baskets. A huge "Shout out" to our sponsors – they have helped us to be able to attend the Annual Conference for free and receive 6.5 CLE credits this year! Terry read the sponsors. There was a total of \$2,175 for sponsorship. Several companies have donated baskets for MALA and swag to give away.

2. Acknowledgment/Presentation of Charter Members. One charter member was supposed to attend, but can't be here today. We created Certificates of Appreciation for each of the original 15 charter members. Some include Annabelle Blade, who is still a member; Ann Johnson, who is still a member; Deb Etheridge, who is still working; and, Rose Plumb, who is still working at Worden Thane. MALA will send each Charter Member a certificate with a gift of appreciation to acknowledge them.

Secretary – Michelle Harelson. Read a summary of the November 17, 2016 Quarterly Business Meeting Minutes. There were no comments or changes and the minutes were approved as published in the Newsletter.

NALA Liaison – Barbara Hartzell, ACP. She joined MALA in 2000-2001. There were approximately 20-25 members at that time. She discussed MALA's membership growth. Membership has tripled in the last 3-4 years. It is great to see the growth and very exciting! We first reached 100 Members in 2014 when she was President. Information as far as current certification as of March 6, 2017 – there are currently 98 CP in Montana! Cool! MALA offers scholarships towards certification. We have 10 scholarships, for 5 CP and 5 ACP. This is a wonderful thing. CP Exams are held in January, May and September each year. We encourage members to apply for scholarships, not just once a year. ACP can be taken any time of year. If you decide to apply for a scholarship before the annual deadline, we can discuss it. Remember, there are now 10 scholarships each year. You need to have your CP before you can get your ACP. There is discussion of starting CP study groups. Let's get a study group together and we have many resources available. PAST members won NALA's Affiliate's Award. 1997-2015 in recognition contributions to goals and progress.

The List of Montana Affiliated Association Award Recipients from July 1995 to July 2015 are as follows: 1997 - LaCinda Williams, CLA; 1998 - Deborah Ethridge, CLA; 2000 - Annette R. Brown, CLA; 2002 - Terry L. Halstead; 2003 - Christine Shoopman; 2006 – Deborah L. Ethridge, ACP; 2007 - Christine R. Shoopman; 2009 - Miva VanEngen; 2010 - Christine Shoopman; and 2015 - LaCinda R. Hanenburg, CLAS

Many awards are available that MALA and NALA offer. Check out NALA's website. There is lots of information and things they do. The NALA conference will be held in in Florida this year July 19-21. Facts and Findings that come out, and reports they use.

Just recently done NALA has made changes to the CP exam. Finish your CP exam by September 2017 or you will end up following the new rules. You will have to finish it all in one sitting or have to start over. That's big. Changes in detail. There are 5 separate sections in the current rules, the new exam will have only 2. It is supposed to be a little smoother. The new CP exam reduces the time limit from 2 days to 3.5 hours total. Changing times and technology, etc. Check NALA website and contact Barbara or Beckie Henderson if you have any questions.

State Bar Paralegal Liaison – Olga Bobko. Olga is not present, so her presentation is given by Barbara Hartzell, ACP who introduces Shani Barry, Chair of the State Bar of Montana, Paralegal Section. We have a 4 Board State Bar. Many MALA members are State Bar members too. She is new to her position of Chair since November, but she was the former State Bar Liaison. Jennifer has been a long time on the State Bar of Montana Paralegal Section Board for 9 years. Barbara Hartzell, ACP has 7-8 years on the Board. The MALA representative. Karen and Shani are new to the Board for the State Bar. The previous Chair was the Chair for a long time, then the Board decided to pass the torch. Very exciting. Plus experts is a good combination. If you are not a member of State Bar Paralegal Section, please join. There are many benefits to a membership and they are hoping to increase them. There is Fast Case – free online legal research engine for free to members; they have a website that does your CLE tracking; a subscription to Montana Law Week; a copy of the Lawyers Deskbook and members are listed in it.



State Bar Paralegal Liaison – Olga Bobko (cont'd.). They have their Annual Meeting during the State Bar annual meeting CLE in September; it is a free FUN social. They have games, drinks, food and it is a great time to get to know each other. They also have attorneys, and other state bar sections attend sometimes. There is access to topics you like. Knowledge of happenings. State Bar and Access to Justice submitted a joint petition to the Montana Supreme Court to look into Limited Licensed Technicians like the State of Washington has done – this is a great career advancement opportunity for us. They have comradery; Professional Advancement and encourage members to obtain their CP. There are less than 100 CP in Montana. Paralegals have a certain status as a state bar member. A judge let her sit at bench as a CP, and denied another paralegal the same right. It helps when you apply for jobs. Get familiar. Status. There is power in Numbers. They are at 150 members now. The more members they have = the more say we have. Paralegals as a Career advancement needs to unify to do that. Membership fees are going up to \$85 this year. \$25 per member for CLE stuff. \$10,000 bank account – hoping to potentially do stuff to encourage members to attend. See how it works. There is always power in numbers.

Treasurer – Adria Kassion. We started QuickBooks in June or July. Things are so much smoother since then. Reports are easier to figure out. You can just add data entries or columns easy and/or make our own. She added a section in the proposed Budget. It is a work in progress to learn what makes the best sense for MALAs needs. Our current savings balance is \$17,702.81 and checking balance is \$7,257.37 . We haven't paid for the 2017 annual meeting and a lot of expenses yet. She encourages everyone to look at the budget and reports and give her your feedback. She moved stuff around from previous layouts. Please look at it and let her know if things need changed. Can do TONS with QuickBooks. It is a huge time saver.

Annette is impressed with the new format. Adria said it is all with the click of a button now, so it is lots easier. QuickBooks has an easy way to prepare reports. You can take a snippet and cut and paste and make it look like this. She did it this way for the newsletter. 10 minutes vs. 5 seconds to do it. It's so much better to use. We used Excel before. MALA has taken LEAPS and BOUNDS in Technology this year!

Membership was previously on Excel. They used Excel to track people, CLEs, when members joined, and to give membership pins on years of membership. We do not have to worry about lost USB drives, or if a computer crashed. MALA Made Leap and Bounds this year. Had the budget in an Excel spreadsheet – her worst fear was that she would bump it and lose it and she was terrified of losing information. With QuickBooks she is on it right now, logged into it. It is stored on the CLOUD. This makes the Treasurer and bookkeeping more transparent for everything.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Harelson
Secretary



[How Social Media Can Help Paralegals Find the Right Job](http://www.my paralegal place.com/2015/10/how-social-media-can-help-paralegals.html)

<http://www.my paralegal place.com/2015/10/how-social-media-can-help-paralegals.html>

Social media allows people to visualize their networks, making it easier for them to find and reach the right people in their job search. However, there are so many options and tools that are now available that getting and staying on top of those options feels almost seems like a full-time job in itself.



— The importance of social media for employers —

Legal recruiters today are increasingly using social media to find and recruit legal professionals as opposed to spending company resources advertising on job sites or using job boards.

Since the beginning of the economic crisis, which we all know greatly affected the legal job market, law firms and legal departments have found it faster, easier, and more cost effective to advertise their jobs on social media sites like LinkedIn and are searching LinkedIn's member profiles for prospective employees who best match their needs. They are also advertising job openings on services such as Twitter, trying to drive applicants to their own web sites to apply.

Finally, employers are often utilizing social media and companies such as [Social Intelligence](#) to screen job applicants by exploring their online lives and (job) histories.

— How to build a solid, professional presence on social networking sites —

With social media, the goal is to develop a personal online "brand" that conveys the job seeker's professionalism, strengths, and talents, and can attract potential employers.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn, the professional social network, has become an invaluable tool to recruiters. Advanced search techniques on LinkedIn allow legal recruiters and HR personnel to search for qualified paralegals based on specific skills, work experiences, degrees, location, etc. They can then reach out directly to those paralegals with the right blend of skills and knowledge, inviting them to apply for openings that, in some cases, have not even been advertised publicly.

Therefore, be sure to find and join existing LinkedIn groups related to HR, legal recruitment, and your legal specialization. You can also "follow" key companies and law firms that may recruit paralegals with your specific profile.

To begin developing your own personal brand and increase the number of your connections, you can even create your own LinkedIn group and provide links to interesting articles and techniques related to job searching in your field of expertise.



Twitter

Companies are also turning to Twitter as a resource for advertising openings. Because of the state of the legal job market, jobs advertised on online job boards often result in a huge influx of applications that do not match the requested profiles. As a result, employers are now finding greater success in **sourcing candidates by advertising links on Twitter**, and thereby drive applicants who follow certain terms to the employer's Web site.

Thus, a good way for paralegals seeking a new position is to follow potential employers' discussions and to learn more about how they are using social media. Being active on Twitter and following these job-related conversations and "hash tags" (i.e. keywords) can be an unorthodox way to be invited to apply to an interesting job.

Facebook

Although Facebook is probably not the best place to find job leads or to network for employment, it is one of the social networks of choice for college students and is also widely used to keep in touch with fellow alumni who can share information and tips on potential job leads.

It is also the network that employers turn to when they are trying to uncover "digital dirt". Digital dirt refers to potentially damaging or compromising information about you that is available on the Internet: your photos, your contributions to message forums, your blogs, your rants and raves, your musings. It may all be out there for the world and for employers to see. So before launching your next career move, it is really important to spend some time cleaning up one's online presence and exploring the precise meaning and use of privacy features on Facebook!

HR and legal-related blogs

Many of the [most well-known HR](#) and [legal bloggers](#) routinely discuss social media use in the recruitment and screening process, giving a real-life, behind-the-scenes look at how social media is affecting legal recruiting.

You can also, of course, create your own blog, share your successes, struggles and triumphs relating to your field, your career development, and even your job search. This can be an efficient way to build your own social media network, engage alumni and other paralegals in conversations and create fruitful discussions that will hopefully lead to your next job!

Reprinted with permission of Jennie Tucker of My Paralegal Place, the article originally appeared in the October 2015 My Paralegal Place Blog. The article is reprinted here in its entirety. For further information, contact The Paralegal Place at paralegalplace@gmail.com



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NALA LIAISON REPORT

Barbara Hartzell, ACP

This year's NALA Convention is in Orlando, Florida!!!! The convention is from July 19-21, 2017. More information on the convention is on NALA's website at www.nala.org. This year MALA will be hosting an Exhibitor's table that the Wyndham Orlando Resort during NALA's Convention. Terry Hale, ACP, and I are looking forward to an exciting time at the Convention.

Just a reminder, MALA does offer scholarships for the CP and ACP exams. If you are interested, please contact me and I will fill you in on what needs to be done. Attached to the Newsletter is NALA's Paralegal Certification Brochure, that gives more information on the CP and ACP. More information is on NALA's website, including up and coming changes to the CP Exam.

If you have any questions, please contact me. Thank you.

Barbara Hartzell, ACP

NEW

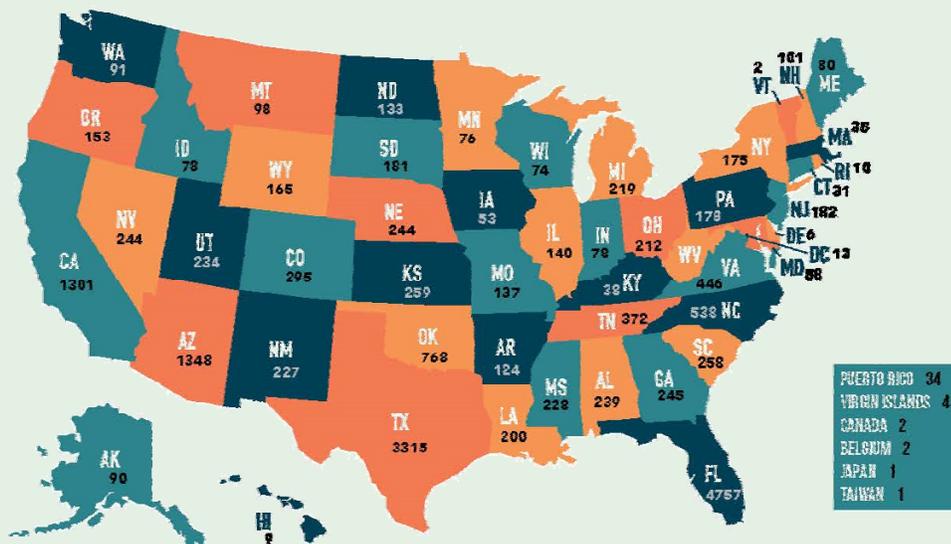
2018 CERTIFIED PARALEGAL EXAM SPECIFICATIONS

- NEW STRUCTURE & CONTENT
- FASTER EXAM RESULTS
- MORE TESTING WINDOWS

[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS!](#)



Certified Paralegals in Your Area





ABOUT US

NALA is the leading paralegal association in the U.S. Its mission is to provide continuing education and professional development programs to all paralegals. NALA provides current information about the profession, continuing education programs (publications, courses and webinars), networking opportunities, professional certification programs, occupational survey reports, and publications to help paralegals excel in the workplace. NALA is a non-profit organization, 501 (c)(6), representing more than 18,000 paralegals, who are individual members or members of NALA affiliated associations.

NALA is a membership organization. This means that the individual members of NALA are the leading force of NALA programs and policies. Through NALA, paralegals across the nation have come together to develop programs and standard setting codes to help them grow in the work place. The association is governed by a Board of Directors, and maintains an office and headquarters staff in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

CERTIFIED PARALEGAL

The Certified Paralegal (CP) credential is key to respect and opportunity throughout the legal profession. Whether the preferred term is “paralegal” or “legal assistant” the CP certifies that the person has passed a demanding examination of the skills and knowledge needed to provide paralegal services. Earning this credential is a proud achievement, and maintaining the right to use it is a career long commitment. Certification must be maintained through continuing education relevant to the demands of the paralegal career.

The CP credential is valid for a period of five years.

RECOGNITION

Firms, corporations, and agencies recognize the Certified Paralegal credential as a credible measure of paralegal competence. The credential has been acknowledged by the American Bar Association as a mark of high professional achievement, and more than 47 paralegal organizations and numerous bar associations also acknowledge the CP as the definitive paralegal certification.

Currently, over 8,900 paralegals may use the Certified Paralegal (CP) designation. The CP credential has been awarded to over 18,000 paralegals in its span of almost 40 years. The Certified Paralegal (CP) program is the first certification program accredited by NCCA which serves the legal community.



ADVANCED CERTIFIED PARALEGAL

The Advanced Certified Paralegal (ACP) credential includes the paralegal's certified status and attests to the paralegal's command of advanced knowledge in the specific practice area or areas.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS ARE:

- The candidate must be a Certified Paralegal in good standing and must submit a Learning Contract for each course within 30 days of enrollment.
- Completion of all modules and exercises in the course, and all course requirements.
- Submission of a Statement of Completion advising the board that the course work is completed, discussing how learning objectives were met, and requesting the credential be awarded.

BENEFITS OF ADVANCED CERTIFICATION

Advanced paralegal certification in specialty practice areas has a positive effect on both paralegals and employers.

- Surveys have consistently shown that firms bill at a higher rate for paralegals with specialty certification, and the paralegal receives higher compensation.
- Employers who hire Advanced Certified Paralegals are getting a professional who has already demonstrated expertise in the skills and knowledge tested by the Certified Paralegal examination.
- Advanced Certified Paralegals can have the opportunity to lead in other programs such as human resources and employee development.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO
BECOME A CP OR ACP PLEASE VISIT

www.nala.org



Montana Association of Legal Assistants*Paralegals

DESIGNATION OF PROXY

I, _____ an active MALA member, hereby appoint
_____, an active MALA member, to serve as my proxyholder at the MALA
Quarterly Meeting on Tuesday, June 20, 2017.

Dated this ____ day of June, 2017.

Signature

Email to:

Amanda Hewitt
Parliamentarian
Amanda@bkbh.com

Mail Original to:

MALA
Attn: Amanda Hewitt
PO Box 9016
Missoula, MT 59807-9016

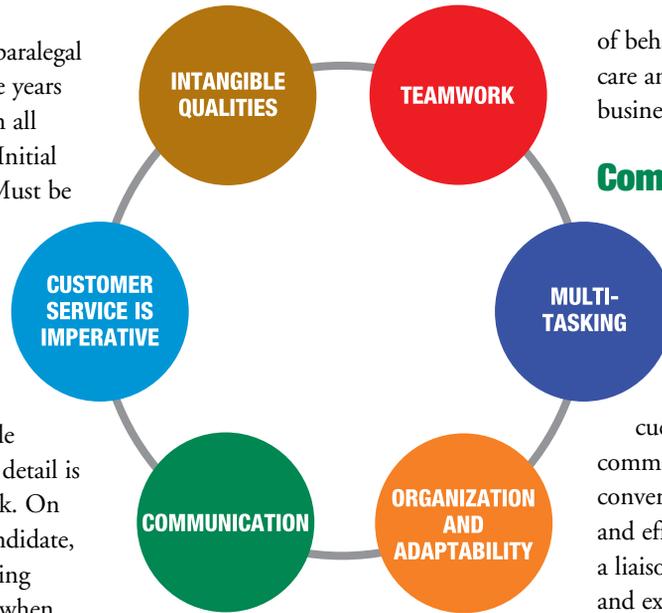
Wanted: Soft Skills

By Kimberly A. Grabbe, ACP, FRP

Wanted: A litigation paralegal with a minimum of five years experience, familiar with all facets of litigation from Initial Complaint through to Jury Trial. Must be flexible, goal-oriented, an excellent communicator and must have a sense of humor. Wait, a sense of humor? Based on your resume, you are a top notch researcher and writer. A master of office technology, organization, document and file management and your attention to detail is impeccable. Check, check and check. On paper, you appear to be a prime candidate, fully capable of adequately performing your job. So you think to yourself, when did having a sense of humor become so important? What kind of circus are they running?

Intangible Qualities

Core skills and experience in our industry are only a fraction of what an employer is looking for, that means “soft,” or intangible qualities, such as leadership skills, a sense of humor or being able to “play well with others,” can be a strong competitive advantage. Employers tend to demand the moon and stars these days, but what they are really looking for are candidates who will be easy to work with. The hard (core) skills, such as legal research, writing, etc., can be taught in school. Employers are looking for the whole package in a candidate. That perfect mix of personal qualities, habits, attitudes, and social graces, or



soft skills will complement any candidate’s core skills. In addition, employers want to make sure all candidates know that going the extra mile is part of the job. These soft skills are essential components in the success of a firm. When a search comes down to two candidates with similar backgrounds and core competencies, the one who may be a better “team player” or who can “wear many hats” is more likely to get the nod.

Customer Service is Imperative

You are the first impression of your firm. Up to 80% of your day is spent communicating with someone, whether it is your client, a potential new client, vendors, experts or your attorney. You are expected to act to a higher standard

of behavior, conduct, competency, client care and general ethics than the average businessman or woman.

Communication

Good communications skills are essential for this role whether it is face-to-face, over the phone, or in writing. Speaking on the phone will require special attention to the tone of your voice. Body language cues are an essential part of face-to-face communications. Email and other web conversations can’t convey tone, so clear and effective writing is important. You are a liaison, you are the lawyer’s right hand, and expressing your thoughts clearly is essential.

Organization and Adaptability

Sometimes, being organized means managing different personalities at once and going outside your comfort zone to fulfill all aspects of a job. If your job is document intensive, it is vital to classify and catalog, categorize and organize everything your attorney needs. Change is inevitable. To stay organized, paralegals must be able to quickly adapt and change priorities at the drop of a hat. However, organizing well is time-intensive. A successful paralegal sets aside great amounts of time to make his or her work flow smoother by organizing and making detailed duty lists.

Multi-Tasking

Very rarely are paralegals assigned to a single case or task. Paralegals must juggle multiple tasks and simultaneously balance priorities. For example, a paralegal may interview a witness, email a client, train a coworker on a new database and research a legal issue within the same one-hour block of time. The most successful paralegals are able to think flexibly, prioritize assignments and balance the demands of multiple supervisors and clients.

Teamwork

Above all, the most important characteristic of an ideal paralegal is teamwork. Since rules regarding the unauthorized practice of law require paralegals to work under the supervision of a lawyer, teamwork is critical to paralegal practice. Paralegals are part of a larger legal team within their organization that may include

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associates, partners, fellow paralegals, legal secretaries and others. It is vital to realize that groups like these may include people with more or less experience than a paralegal may have. Paralegals must also work collaboratively with outside parties including clients, opposing counsel, experts and vendors. The delivery of legal services is complex where a team with multiple skills is necessary to provide quality and cost-effective service.

Kimberly A. Grabbe, *ACP, FRP*, is the senior paralegal within the vaccine department at Maglio Christopher & Toale P.A., in the Firm's Sarasota office. She is a member of the Paralegal Association of Florida Suncoast Chapter, Editor of the chapter's newsletter, "In Re: Suncoast Review" and editorial co-chair for the Paralegal Association of Florida, Inc., newsletter "In Brief." Kim Grabbe is also a member of the State College of Florida Paralegal/Legal Assisting Program Advisory Committee. Prior to joining the firm, she spent eleven years working for the Sarasota Sheriff's office, primarily in Public Safety Communications (911 dispatch) as a supervisor, Emergency Medical Dispatch Quality Assurance officer and training officer.



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Family Law:

Division of Property and Spousal Support APC Course

The NALA Advanced Paralegal Certification Board has released Family Law - Division of Property and Spousal Support. The second of four advanced programs for family law paralegals, this course concentrates on practice and procedure in the area of alimony and property division.

Modules in the course cover the general topics of the legal framework through which alimony and property division obligations are imposed and enforced, and:

- property and support during marriage
- identification of property for agreements and litigation resolution
- premarital and marital agreements
- basic principles and particular issues in property distribution
- alimony awards and agreements
- discovery issues and alimony and property distribution
- income tax consequences to awards
- modification and enforcement of alimony and property division agreements and orders.

Upon successful completion of this course, including all course

requirements, qualified Certified Paralegals will receive an Advanced Certified Paralegal (ACP) credential in Family Law – Division of Property and Spousal Support.

The APC Board has determined that an ACP designation in Family Law will be awarded to Certified Paralegals who complete the following courses:

- Child Support, Visitation and Child Custody
- Division of Property and Spousal Support
- Adoption and Assisted Reproduction
- Dissolution Case Management

Successful completion of all 4 courses will lead to an advanced certification in Family Law.

Visit the NALA web site: Certification/Advanced Paralegal Certification to learn more about Family Law - Division of Property and Spousal Support.



Certified Paralegals who successfully complete this APC course, and all requirements, are entitled to earn 20 hours of CLE credit, in addition to award of the Advanced Certified Paralegal credential.

[The Paralegal Society™](#)

~ a forum created to educate, motivate and inspire paralegals to engage in the pursuit of excellence for all paralegalkind.



“Hey, New Grads –Here’s How to Get Your First Job!”

[24MondayJun 2013](#)

Posted by [Jamie Collins](#) in [Aspiring Paralegal](#), [Employment Tips](#), [Experienced Paralegal](#), [General](#), [New Paralegal](#)

By: Tammy Essing, ACP, PHP

Welcome back, TPS readers! We hope today’s post finds you well-refreshed and partially sane, following a fun and fabulous weekend! The way we see it, today’s post is for *everyone*. Yep, true story. Whether you’re in search of your first paralegal position or a senior paralegal living the dream, today’s post is making its way onto the TPS blog with the intention of bringing us all together. (You know, like we’re all a part of some elite, super cool “paralegal society” or something!)

Paralegal Students & Recent Grads: This post is for you!



So, you did it! You're a new graduate of the paralegal program! Congratulations! Now, here comes the hard part...how and where to begin to get yourself that first paralegal job.

Now, before I offer up some suggestions, I feel that something needs to be said here. Please do not be discouraged if you find the job market to be a little tough, and you don't find the paralegal job of your dreams right away. I'm not trying to be negative here, so I don't want you to think that I'm trying to be Debbie Downer. However, realistically speaking, just don't be surprised if you find a lot of employers are looking for those paralegals with experience these days. It has nothing to do with how good you were in school, or how good your computer skills are, or your writing skills, it's just that the paralegals that have been through the hard knocks of working in a law firm for years, know what is expected, what's involved, and know the industry like the back of their hand. The plain truth is that the majority of law firms just do not have the time to train new paralegals because of the fast-paced world in which they work.

With all of that said, here's a couple of suggestions. First, be OPEN and WILLING to start where ever you can with a law firm. If you get that call for an interview at a law firm, but they tell you the position is for a file clerk position, in a mailroom, or copy room position, BE WILLING to start there. I say that from experience! I started out my career in the mailroom, and now here I am some 20 years later working as a senior paralegal!

If you prove yourself to that new employer that you are willing to work hard (no matter the position), plug-in and learn about the ins and outs of working in a law firm, you can get your foot in the door, and work your way to the paralegal track. Then, after some time working in the copy room, the file room or in the mailroom, you find yourself with some down time during the day, ask the senior paralegals to give you some starting projects you can work on and learn from. Make sure you ask questions, ask questions, and ask questions! It shows your enthusiasm and willingness to learn! Let the senior paralegals mentor you. (You only learn about 10% in school of what you will face in the job, so the senior paralegals are a treasure trove of information!) As you are allowed to take on those projects during your spare time, you will gain the trust of those who entrust you with the projects.

Another suggestion – think about using a recruiter! Granted, they do make commission from your placement at a job, but they also have great contacts out in the field, too. A friendly contact of theirs just may be the ticket to that first job because they may know someone who is willing to give you that first break.

There are *some* firms willing to hire paralegals right out of school because they are willing to invest the time and training, but these type of positions are so few. So, if you are lucky enough to find those positions posted, apply for them.

Consider joining your local paralegal association(s), network with other paralegals in the industry, and pick their brains for leads and advice. They have amazing contact information and career expertise! Also, go to the association's CLE seminars and learn as much as you can, including areas that you might be interested in.

You're going to find that first job...just be patient, realistic, open and willing to start anywhere! By eating the elephant one bite at a time, you'll soon find yourself on the track to earning your paralegal position!

Tammy Essing, ACP, PHP is a senior litigation paralegal with 20 years of litigation experience, with a primary focus on litigated matters. She has handled a wide variety of litigated matters in oil and gas, commercial, complex commercial, construction, environmental and tort matters in both federal state level courts. She is advanced certified in trial practice through the National Litigation of Legal Assistants.

Reprinted with permission of Tammy Essing, ACP, PHP and courtesy of the Paralegal Society, the article originally appeared in the June 24, 2013 The Paralegal Society. The article is reprinted here in its entirety.

RECIPES

COOL SUMMER CAKES MAKE YOUR PICNICS GREAT!

This Gluten-Free No-Bake Strawberry Shortcake Icebox Cake is the perfect gluten-free summer dessert recipe. Just 5 ingredients and make-ahead, too!

Gluten-Free No-Bake Strawberry Shortcake Icebox Cake



Serves 9

Ingredients

- 3 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup + 2 Tablespoons powdered sugar
- 2, 6oz packages Enjoy Life Sugar Crisp Crunchy Cookies or other Gluten-Free Cookies
- 1-1/2lbs strawberries, trimmed and sliced

Directions

1. Place the bowl of an electric mixer, or a large glass bowl if using a hand mixer, in the freezer to chill for at least 10 minutes. Fit electric mixer with the whipping attachment then add heavy whipping cream and vanilla to the chilled bowl. Whip on low speed while gradually adding powdered sugar then gradually increase speed as whipped cream thickens. Whip until cream can hold its shape but is not lumpy.
2. Spread a thin layer of whipped cream into the bottom of an 8x8" baking dish. Layer in 9 of the cookies, spread on another layer of whipped cream, and then top with 1/3 of the strawberries. Repeat layers - cookies, whipped cream, and strawberries - two more times to create three layers total (you might have a little extra whipped cream at the end.) Cover dish with saran wrap then refrigerate overnight. When ready to serve, slice then serve immediately.



Looking for a quick and easy Summer dessert recipe? Try out this delicious No Bake Summer Berry Icebox Cake!

No Bake Summer Berry Icebox Cake



Serves: 12-16

Ingredients

- 19 oz graham crackers
- 8 oz cream cheese, softened
- 2 (3.4 oz) packages Vanilla Instant Pudding
- 2-1/2 cups cold milk
- 12 oz Cool whip (or homemade whipped cream)
- Coupons
- 3 cups fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1-1/2 cups fresh blueberries
- 2 oz white chocolate chips

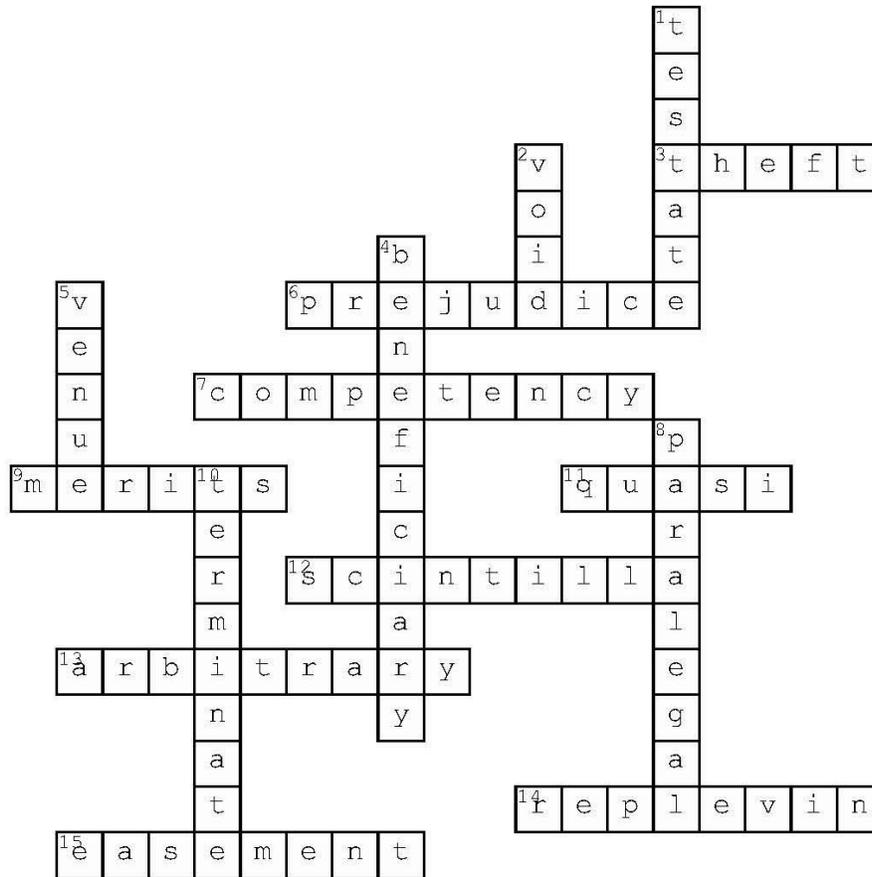
Instructions

1. Beat cream cheese and dry pudding mixes in large bowl with mixer until blended.
2. Gradually beat in milk.
3. Gently stir in Cool Whip or homemade whipped cream, reserving 1/2 cup.
4. Spread a thin layer of cool whip in a 9x13 pan just to coat the bottom.
5. Layer 5 graham crackers across the center of the pan, then 2 more, breaking them as needed to fit around the top and bottom edges.
6. Spread a layer of pudding mixture over grahams and top with a layer of blueberries and sliced strawberries.
7. Place graham crackers on top of berries, then pudding mixture, then layer of berries again.
8. Repeat the graham-pudding-berries layers 1 more time (3 times total) and you should reach the top of the pan.
9. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight until the graham crackers have softened completely.
10. When ready to serve, melt white chocolate chips in a bowl as directed on package and drizzle over dessert.
11. You can use a spoon to drizzle it over the tops of the berries or you can put it into a small zip-top bag and snip of the corner for an easy "piping bag."



CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Answer Key



Created with TheTeachersCorner.net [Crossword Puzzle Generator](http://TheTeachersCorner.net)

Across

3. the act of stealing (**theft**)
6. a forejudgment ;bias; partiality; preconceived opinion (**prejudice**)
7. characterictis or disabilities which render a witness legally fit and qualified to give testimony (**competency**)
9. as a legal term, refers to the strict legal rights of the parties (**merits**)
11. as if; almost as it were; analogous to (**quasi**)
12. a spark; a remaining particle; a trifle; the least particle (**scintilla**)
13. in an unreasonable manner, as fixed or done capriciously or at pleasure (**arbitrary**)
14. an action whereby the onwers or person entitled to repossession of goods or chattels may recover from another (**replevin**)
15. right of use over the property of another (**easement**)

Down

1. one who has made a will; one who dies leaving a will (**testate**)
2. null; ineffectual; nugatory; having no legal force or binding effect (**void**)
4. one who benefits from act of another (**beneficiary**)
5. place in which the suit is brought (**venue**)
8. person with legal skills, but who is not an attorney (**paralegal**)
10. to put an end to; to make to cease; to end (**terminate**)





Montana Association of Legal Assistants/Paralegals

MALA Brown Bag Seminar

Limited License Legal Technician Program: The History and Future of the Program

Presented by:

*Paula Littlewood, WSBA Executive Director
and*

Steve Crossland, Washington Supreme Court LLLT Board Chair



Wednesday, July 12, 2017

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Live in Missoula (Location Pending)

and

Teleconference

1.5 CLE Credit



Speakers Bios: **Paula Littlewood** joined the WSBA staff as deputy director in September 2003 and became the Bar's executive director in May 2007. She is a graduate of the University of Washington School of Law and also received a Master of International Studies degree from UW. Prior to law school, she was a professional campaign coordinator and fundraiser here in the state, working both on statewide candidate and initiative campaigns as well as local legislative races. She taught English in Taiwan for two years and spent another 10 months traveling in China and Southeast Asia. After law school, she served as assistant dean for administration and public relations at the UW law school for five years, then spent a year in Telluride, Colorado, before joining the WSBA. In addition to her full-time position as executive director of the WSBA, Littlewood is a member of the Executive Committee of the University of Washington School of Law Leadership Council, and she is a member of the International Institute of Law Association Executives (IILACE) executive committees and chair of its Program Committee. She recently served as a member of the American Bar Association's Task Force on the Future of Legal Education and currently serves on the ABA's Commission on the Future of Legal Services. She co-chairs the Regulatory Opportunities Subcommittee on the Future of Legal Services Commission.

Steve Crossland has been practicing law for over 40 years. He is a 1969 graduate of Stanford University with a degree in Political Science. Lewis and Clark College, Northwestern School of Law in Oregon conferred a JD in 1973. The Washington Supreme Court appointed Steve to Chair the Limited License Legal Technician Board in December 2012. Steve was President of the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) in 2011 and also served on the WSBA Board of Governors from 1995 -1998. In 2002 he received the Award of Merit from the WSBA, which is the highest award conferred upon a lawyer in the association. Evolving over the years, his practice now focuses on real estate, estate planning, business law and mediations. Over the past 25 years, he has served on a variety of committees and task forces dealing with the unauthorized practice of law, access to justice and related subjects.

Registration Opens June 15, 2017



Montana Association of Legal Assistants*Paralegals



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