



SPRING 1997

PARALEGAL ADVANCED COMPETENCY EXAM

For paralegals who want an alternative to the National Association of Legal Assistant's Certified Legal Assistant examination, now available is the Paralegal Advanced Competency Exam, or PACE.

Sponsored by the National Federation of Paralegal Associations and years in development, the exam was first administered in the Fall of 1996. According to NFPA, the examination is designed to test the competency level of experienced paralegals.

PACE is comprised of two tiers. Tier I addresses general legal issues and ethics. Tier II addresses specialty sections. To sit for Tier I, a paralegal must have either a four year degree (with paralegal studies as part of the curriculum) and two years of experience, or a bachelor's degree (any area of study) and a certificate in paralegal studies. Pursuant to a grandparent provision, during the first three years in which PACE is offered, paralegals not having a four year degree will be able to sit for the examination.

The exam is comprised of true or false questions and is taken on a computer. Testing duration is approximately four hours. Questions are randomly selected from a base of over 1,000. This test format almost assures that no two persons will receive an identical exam and those having to repeat the exam will not be given the same questions.

The cost for taking the exam is approximately \$250. When successfully completed, the applicant receives the designation "Certified Paralegal."

A study manual is available from NFPA for \$50 plus \$5 shipping. For more information, contact the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, PO Box 33108, Kansas City, Missouri 64114-0108, (816) 941-4000 FAX (816) 941-2725.

NFPA? NALA? OKAY!!!

So, what is NALA and NFPA? NFPA, the National Federation of Paralegal Assistants, Inc., established in 1974, is comprised of approximately 60 local and state-level paralegal associations. Its association members represent in excess of 17,000 paralegals. Twice yearly representatives from each state and local member organization meet to discuss, debate, and vote on issues affecting paralegals. Individual paralegals may become sustaining members.

The New Orleans Paralegal Association and the Baton Rouge Paralegal Association are members of NFPA. For additional information, contact NFPA at PO Box 33108, Kansas City, MO 64114-0108 (816) 941-4000 FAX (816) 941-2725.

NALA, the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., was incorporated in 1975. Its membership is comprised of 5,000 individual paralegals and 89 state and local affiliated associations, representing over 16,000 legal assistants.

The Louisiana State Paralegal Association is a NALA affiliate. The Lafayette Paralegal Association is not affiliated with either NALA or NFPA. For additional information, contact NALA at 1516 S. Boston Avenue, Suite 200, Tulsa, OK 74119, (918) 587-6828 FAX (918) 582-6772.

PARALEGAL OCCUPATIONAL SURVEY

Lafayette Paralegal Association Occupation Survey is available to members for \$5 and to non-members for \$10. For your copy, please contact chairperson **Martha LeJeune at (318) 235-7508** or **Gary Lavalley at (318) 233-3033.**



EDITOR'S CORNER

Mary Margaret Comeaux, CLA



What a great 1996-97 year for LPA. But the 1997-98 year promises to be even better. Our new officers and chairmen are working to present our members with interesting meetings, informative programs, and entertaining socials. If you missed participating last year, I urge you to make participation a priority item for this year.

With this newsletter, I sing my "swan song" which is very appropriate for me, as I *am* a singer. I am passing the editor's torch and assuming the chair of the Education Committee. Thanks to all for your assistance with the newsletter, for your encouragement and your kind words.

PRESIDENT'S

MESSAGE



Gary Lavallee



Lafayette Paralegal Association has been in existence for fourteen years. We are healthy and growing — and not in membership alone. There were milestones reached during the past year.

Attendance at LPA general membership monthly meetings increased to an average of 24 with 55 persons attending one of our luncheon meetings. The National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) certified for CLE credit the majority of speakers at our meetings giving members an opportunity to earn five hours of free CLE!! The Lafayette Volunteer Lawyers have requested paralegal involvement and assistance, and have invited an LPA member to sit on its advisory board.

The annual raffle was a great success. Community businesses provided numerous door prizes for various LPA events. The Legal Expo attracted a large crowd. Speakers at our meetings informed us about matters involved with accident reconstruction, family law, the local court system, and federal rules and procedures. Now, if you have not been active, see what you missed!!!

Our September social at the Petroleum Club was attended by judges, attorneys, paralegals, paralegal students, and legal secretaries. Members enjoyed a lovely *free* Christmas dinner at the City Club. The LPA 1996 Occupational Survey hit the legal community's bestseller list. Our newsletter has been distributed throughout the state and used as a model by other paralegal associations.

LPA has been put on the Lafayette Parish Bar Association's mailing list for upcoming legal seminars. Study groups for the CLA examination were organized

and a number of LPA members received their certification. *Bravo!* The bylaws were amended to allow new members to join at any time during the year and pay dues on a prorata basis. One thing LPA did not do was increase dues!!

Many thanks to all who put so much effort and time into LPA and made the above and so much more happen. You know who you are and I have a great deal of respect and admiration for all who found time (*a tough chore!*) to give to LPA and the paralegal profession, and to increase their professional qualifications and abilities.

Some have been unable to participate for various reasons. Some just did not *take* the time. "Been there; done that." is something we all hear too often. Well, I have *been* around longer than all of you and have *done* that, but I will continue to be a part of this organization which brings paralegals together and is making tremendous strides toward increased recognition and respect for the paralegal profession. Ultimately, that will affect all our pocketbooks! How about jumping on board?

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We would like to extend our welcome to the following new members:

<u>Active</u>	<u>Associate</u>
Cassie Ann Hebert	Dawn Kendig
Annette Allen	Gail Dubois-Broussard
Tricia L. Champagne	Karen H. Broussard
Janice O. Rochon	
Karla Vest Vinet	
Karin Broussard	

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Thanks to our sustaining members for their continued support.

Allen & Gooch	Piccione & Piccione
Remington College	Saloom & Saloom
The Andrus Firm	Anderson & Broussard
Prejean's Restaurant	Lowry's Kwik Kopy
Davidson, Meaux, Sonnier, McElligott & Swift	

MEMBERSHIP PACKETS

If you have not received your membership packet containing a membership certificate and a list of members and their addresses, please contact membership chairperson, **Al Thomas at (318) 233-2247.**

Active	39
Associate	28
Sustaining	6
Total Membership:	73



**KATHY DEMPSEY
TO BE PARALEGAL
REPRESENTATIVE**

Kathy Dempsey has been invited to be the paralegal representative to the Lafayette Volunteer Lawyers Board of Directors. Kathy received her certification from the National Center for Paralegal Training in Atlanta, Georgia. She has been a paralegal for 11 years, and is presently with the firm of Durio, McGoffin & Stagg. Congratulations, Kathy!

**LAFAYETTE PARISH BAR ASSOCIATION
LEGAL EXPO**

The Lafayette Paralegal Association was represented at the Lafayette Parish Bar Association's annual Legal Expo held Thursday, December 5, at the Lafayette Hilton. LPA and the Louisiana State Paralegal Association co-sponsored a booth. Visitors to the booth registered for a \$50 gift certificate donated to LPA by Prejean's Restaurant.

A hearty "Thank you." goes to Al Thomas, Gary Lavallee, and Cheryl Myers, who manned the booth for LPA.

**LPA MEMBERS SERVE
AT STATE LEVEL**

Congratulations to the Lafayette Paralegal Association members who were elected or appointed chairpersons by the Louisiana State Paralegal Association at its Annual Meeting held September 13 and 14 in Shreveport.

- Lupe Acosta - President
- Angela Rayon, CLA - President-Elect
- Jessie Cormier, CLA - District II Director
- Ruth Veillon - Scholarship
- Karen Guidry, CLA - Nominations/Credentials
- Cheryl Myers - Job Bank
- Judy Cadoret - Newsletter
- Martha Lejeune - Salary/Compensation Survey



*Jessie Cormier, Cheryl Myers, Al Thomas,
Ruth Veillon, and Gail Dubois-Broussard*

**LAFAYETTE TO HOST LOUISIANA
STATE PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING AND CLE SEMINAR**

Lafayette will be the site of the Louisiana State Paralegal Association's Annual Meeting and CLE Seminar, according to Lupe Acosta, President of LSPA. The event will be held September 19 and 20.

Volunteers from Lafayette Paralegal Association are needed for committee work and coordination with LSPA. Brochures will be distributed to all LPA members. Please call any member of LPA to volunteer your time and expertise.

LPA ELECTS 1997-1998 OFFICERS



Lafayette Paralegal Association, at its February meeting, elected officers for the 1997-1998 term. Pictured left to right are: Gary Lavallee, President; Wayne Lemoine, Treasurer; Michelle Moran, CLA, Secretary; and, Al Thomas, Vice President.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If your home address or place of employment has changed, please complete the following form and mail to: LPA, c/o Al Thomas, Post Office Box 2775, Lafayette, LA 70502.

Name _____

Telephone: Home _____

Office _____

New Address _____

New Employer: _____

RANDY THEUNISSEN SPEAKS TO LPA

Local attorney, Randy Theunissen, was the guest speaker at LPA's November meeting held at the law firm of Allen & Gooch. Mr. Theunissen's in-depth presentation, "How to Proceed in Federal Court," was accompanied by a "how to" packet containing document forms, federal law, and local procedural rules. Mr. Theunissen's practice centers around suits involving maritime law, the majority of which are litigated in federal court.

DR. DAVEY BERNARD SPEAKS TO LPA

USL Professor of Physics and accident reconstructionist, Dr. Davey Bernard, was the guest speaker at LPA's October meeting. Dr. Bernard presented his reconstruction of an actual auto accident scene. His presentation included elements of trial preparation and testimony, photo presentations, calculations, and some pitfalls of accident reconstruction preparation.

SUSAN THEALL SPEAKS ON PRO BONO WORK

Susan Theall, Family Law Specialist and member of the Advisory Board of the Lafayette Volunteer Lawyers, was a guest speaker at the February meeting of LPA. LVL is seeking paralegal participation in its *pro bono* projects.

Lafayette Volunteer Lawyers was founded in 1987 and is comprised of 180 Lafayette Parish attorneys willing to represent indigent residents in civil matters without a fee. The majority of cases involve divorce. LVL will train paralegals to handle preliminary preparation, leaving the attorney to appear in court. Paralegals also may assist LVL attorneys who do not have regular paralegal services.

Paralegals may earn CLE hours for their participation in LVL projects. If you would like to increase your knowledge, gain experience, and earn CLE hours, contact the Lafayette Volunteer Lawyers at (318) 237-4700.

CLA AND LCP EXAMINATIONS

Are you planning to sit for the CLA and LCP examinations? Please let us know. Would like to contact others preparing for the examinations? Call **Mary Margaret Comeaux, CLA** at (318) 233-5056.

LPA PRESENTATIONS APPROVED FOR CLE CREDIT

The National Association of Legal Assistants has approved for CLE credit the following presentations made at 1996 Lafayette Paralegal Association meetings:

Judge Douglas J. Saloom, May 31; Ms. Paula Woodruff, June 25; Mr. Earl "Nicky" Picard, July 24; Dr. Davey Bernard, October 17; and, Mr. Randall Theunissen, November 19.

Each CLA is required to have 50 hours of CLE credit in a five-year period, or 10 hours per year. A maximum of five credits, or one-half year CLE requirement, could have been obtained by attending LPA meetings.

Affidavits verifying attendance may be obtained from LPA and must be forwarded to NALA to obtain CLE credit. To obtain affidavits, please contact **Mary Margaret Comeaux, CLA**, at (318) 233-5056.

A schedule of speakers for 1997 is being prepared. If you would like an update in a particular area of the law, please make your suggestion to one of the LPA officers. All suggestions will be welcomed.

LOUISIANA PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION EXAM

The LCP examination will be administered April 11 and 12, 1997 in Alexandria and October 3 and 4, 1997 in Baton Rouge. Paralegals who successfully complete the examination will obtain the designation of Louisiana Certified Paralegal, LCP®.

LCP certification is a two-step process. To receive the LCP designation, a paralegal must have obtained a CLA® certification from the National Association of Legal Assistants at the time the LCP exam is taken, or must obtain the CLA certification within three years from the date of notification of having passed the LCP exam.

The LCP examination includes mandatory testing of the following: General Law, Ethics, and Civil Procedure, together with four elective subjects to be chosen from the following: Business Organizations, Contracts, Criminal Law and Procedure, Evidence, Family Law, Property, Torts, Wills/Probate/Successions/Trusts.

Examination fee is \$175 for members of the Louisiana State Paralegal Association members and \$195 for non-members. More information may be obtained by contacting **Jessie Cormier, CLA**, at (318) 266-1194.

LPA CELEBRATES PARALEGAL WEEK

Paralegal Week was celebrated with a wine and cheese social held at The Petroleum Club of Lafayette on September 19. Local attorneys, paralegals, secretaries, and paralegal students attended.

Kaye Pooler and Dianne Connery



Nita Piccione and Ruth Veillon

CITY CLUB

SITE OF CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

LPA members had a Joyeux Noel at the annual Christmas Social held at City Club on December 10. Gifts and Christmas cheer were exchanged and delicious meal shared.



Jessie Cormier, Kathy Dempsey and Karen Romero



Charles King (standing), Kaye and Ben Pooler



Gary Lavallee (standing), Brian Butler, Peggy Connick, and Lea Lavallee

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE LOUISIANA STATE PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

The Louisiana State Paralegal Association invites you to join with other paralegals throughout the state for the opportunity to network and keep up to date on current statewide news of interest to our profession.

Among the reasons for joining LSPA are: Continuing legal education through seminars and workshops, quarterly newsletter, statewide job bank, scholarships, legislative lobbying committee, and professional enhancement.

For further information on LSPA, a membership application, and the latest copy of the LSPA newsletter contact: **Jessie L. Cormier, CLA, LSPA District II Director, P.O. Drawer 5307, Lafayette, LA 70502 (318) 266-1194 or Fax (318) 266-1232.**

PARALEGAL JOB BANK

The Lafayette Paralegal Association maintains a job bank service available to all LPA members seeking part time, temporary, or contract paralegal positions. Each year LPA sends a letter to every attorney/firm in the Lafayette area informing them of this service.

The job bank is confidential! LPA members may obtain information regarding available positions by contacting the Job Bank Chairperson at **(318) 266-1152**. An employer seeking a paralegal may not be given the names of job bank applicants. As positions become available, the Job Bank Chairperson will contact applicants meeting an employer's job qualifications.

LPA would like to assist its members and the legal community in filling available paralegal positions. We encourage all members seeking a position to fill out the application and return it along with a resume' to: **Peggy Connick, P.O. Drawer 3507, Lafayette, LA 70502.**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Paralegal Certificate: Yes ___ No ___

ABA approved: Yes ___ No ___

Institution: _____

Paralegal Experience: _____ Years: _____

Area(s) of Specialty: _____

College Degree: _____ Major _____

Institution: _____

Special Skills: _____

1997 NALA CONVENTION

The 23rd Annual Meeting and Seminar of the National Association of Legal Assistants will be held June 30 through July 3 in Washington, D.C. at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill. The convention program includes corporate exhibits, membership meetings, and special discussion sessions designed to encourage paralegal participation in national issues.

For more information on attending the annual meeting, becoming a NALA member, or subscribing to the NALA journal, *Facts & Findings*, please call **Jessie Cormier, CLA**, at (318) 266-1194.

LAW LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS

The Lafayette Parish Bar Association has requested volunteer help with monitoring the Law Library on Tuesday evenings and Saturday morning and in daily shelving and maintaining publications. To volunteer, please call the **Lafayette Parish Law Library** at (318) 237-4700 or Gary Lavalley at (318) 233-3033.

INTERNET INFO

Need worldwide paralegal information? Check out *paralegals.org* on the Internet. Once on the Internet, type *http://www.paralegals.org*.

LAIR, a newsletter offered by the Center of Computer-Based Legal Research of the Tarlton Law Library, provides weekly highlights of new or developing legal resources. It is available at *tnewell@mail.law.utexas.edu*.

Washburn University School of Law's Web site offers links to law related Internet resources at *http://lawlib.wuacc.edu/*.

THINKING OF RELOCATING?

If you are planning a move to another city, you may be interested in contacting the paralegal associations in your new domicile. The following associations are very active and publish informative newsletters: New Orleans Paralegal Association, P.O. Box 30604, New Orleans, LA 70190, or by E-Mail at *neworleans@paralegals.org*; Baton Rouge Paralegal Association, P.O. Box 306, Baton Rouge, LA 70821; Dallas Association of Legal Assistants, P.O. Box 12533, Dallas, TX 75225.

Other area associations are: Northwest Louisiana Paralegal Association, P.O. Box 1913, Shreveport, LA 71166-1913; Southwest Louisiana Association of Paralegals, P.O. Box 1143, Lake Charles, LA 70602-1143.

LPA OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS FOR 1997-1998

Gary Lavalley, President	233-3033
Dr. Thomas, Vice President	233-2247
Michael Morgan, CLU, Secretary	234-2355
Wanda, Treasurer	948-8383
Michael Morgan, Education Secretary	233-7688
Michael Morgan, Public Affairs Chairman	984-7751
Michael Morgan, Public Affairs	266-1152
Michael Morgan, Public Affairs, Education	233-8056
Suzannah Stephan, CLU, Newsletter	233-8056

Lafayette Paralegal Association

P. O. Box 2775
Lafayette, LA 70502



**NOT DELIVERABLE
AS ADDRESSED
UNABLE TO FORWARD**

