

# Lafayette Paralegal Association

*September, 2011*  
*Newsletter*

## LPA 2011 – 2012 Officers and Committee Chairs

President: Jodie Viguerie  
Vice-President: Savannah Stephan  
Treasurer: Debbie Billiot  
Parliamentarian:  
Deborah P. Fontenot, CP  
Secretary: Kathy D. Stanley, CLA  
Corresponding Secretary:  
Cheri-lea McDonald  
Education/Scholarship:  
Molly Davenport, CLA  
LSPA Liaison: Jessie Cormier, CP, LCP  
Nominations/Elections:  
Kaye Pooler, CWCP, CMSP  
Program: Kaye Pooler, CWCP, CMSP  
Public Relations: Renatti S. Dupont, CP  
Social: Debbie Billiot  
Survey: Savannah Stephan  
Website: Deborah P. Fontenot, CP

*It's time to renew your LPA Membership.*

## Why Join LPA?

"So why join an organization like LPA" you may ask. Well, first of all, it looks good on your resume! As with any organization, professionalism and longevity are important, and with 27+ years under its belt LPA certainly meets those criteria. LPA is an organization that supports and provides its members with many and varied opportunities for continuing education, including a Scholarship Program, (see [www.lpa-la.org](http://www.lpa-la.org) for more information) and exposure to all aspects and areas of the law. In addition, the unique ability that LPA provides to its members to meet and network with others for help, guidance, or solutions when confronted with unfamiliar situations or areas of the law, is priceless. A quick phone call or e-mail has saved me many hours of unnecessary searching for the right person or court or form(s) to use in an unfamiliar venue. Most importantly to me however, are the personal relationships that have resulted. I can truly say that the friendships that developed during my tenure with LPA will last a lifetime. So give yourself a "one-up" and join LPA if you haven't already done so. If you are a member, give this to a co-worker or friend and encourage them to join us at the Social or at one of our upcoming seminars to see what they are missing.

-Kaye Pooler, CWCP, CMSP

Post Office Box 2775  
Lafayette, LA 70502-2775  
[www.lpa-la.org](http://www.lpa-la.org)

*City Parish President Joey Durel  
Proclaims September 12 – 16, 2011  
Paralegal Week in Lafayette*



Cheri-lea McDonald, LPA Corresponding Sec.  
Joey Durel, City-Parish President  
Jodie Viguerie, LPA President  
Kathy D. Stanley, CLA, LPA Secretary

## President's Note

HOT! HOT! HOT! That's the LPA. Can you believe that we are in our 27<sup>th</sup> year and still going strong? Please give yourselves a congratulatory pat on the back. How awesome? How many organizations can say the same? We are truly blessed to have members dedicated to our successful organization and who have worked so hard over the years to maintain its integrity and values. As was stated by Colin Powell, former U.S. Secretary of State,

*"There are no secrets to success as it is the result of preparation, hard work and learning from failure."*

The paralegal profession itself continues to be a rewarding career and its future a bright one. Our organization has always been dedicated to the advancement of the paralegal profession through education and a network of support. The future of the LPA continues to be dependent on each one of us. The focus will always be recruitment of new members, strengthening membership involvement, education of its members, and the development of future leadership.

I realize we all have personal lives, demanding and sometimes stressful jobs, and family commitments, but I encourage each one of you to become more involved with the LPA, even for just a little bit of time. I would also ask you to help me to



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Wednesday, September 14, 2011**  
**5:15 – 7:30 pm**  
**A La Carte Restaurant**  
**PARALEGAL WEEK SOCIAL**  
**& Membership Drive**

**Tuesday, September 20, 2011**  
**Michael Hebert,**  
**LCG City-Parish Attorney**

**Tuesday, October 18, 2011**  
**Ken St. Pé presenting:**  
**Nursing Home Abuse & Neglect**

**Friday, October 21, 2011**  
**LPA Beer-tending at**  
**Downtown Alive**

**Tuesday, November 15, 2011**  
**Federal Courthouse, Lafayette**  
**(brown bag lunch)**  
**Cathy Bacon, presenting**  
**The Updated Electric Courtroom**

**December 15, 2011**  
**12:00 noon @ A La Carte**  
**Christmas Luncheon**  
**And Acadiana Youth Project**

- Regular monthly meetings are held at the Petroleum Club of Lafayette. The cost of the buffet or soup/salad bar is still only \$15 per person, and a beverage fee of \$3.00 for anyone not eating (all prices are inclusive of tax and gratuity).
- Seminars are free to members; non-members are asked to pay a \$5 seminar fee.

## President's Note (Cont'd)

continue to promote our wonderful organization.

In order to be of continued service to you, I welcome your comments, suggestions and ideas.

I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming Social at À La Carte Cafe on Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>, at Downtown Alive on Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>, at our Christmas luncheon on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> and of course our regular monthly luncheon meetings.

-Jodie Viguerie  
LPA President 2011 – 2012

## ALWAYS SWAMPED? WORK HARD/PLAY HARD WITH LPA!

### PARALEGAL WEEK SOCIAL AND MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

September 14<sup>th</sup>

At 5:15 p.m. at À La Carte Cafe

Yes, it's true "Paralegals are Always Swamped"! So give yourself a break and join LPA members and friends at our Annual Paralegal Week Social and Membership Drive at À La Carte Cafe on Wednesday, September 14, 2011 between 5:15 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. A good time is promised for all. Door prizes will be awarded! As an extra incentive for our membership drive, the person with the most new members in attendance will win a special prize! Come early, bring a friend, stay late, or just stop by for a short while to network with other hard working and deserving legal servants.

### UPCOMING SEMINARS

**September 20<sup>th</sup> at the Petroleum Club  
12:00 Noon - 1:30 p.m.**

**Mike Hebert, LCG City-Parish Attorney**

Mr. Hebert was appointed chief attorney for Lafayette Consolidated Government and head of LCG's legal department in January of this year. Mr. Hebert, who is considered an expert on annexations and other governmental issues, formerly served as City Attorney before the City and Parish of Lafayette were consolidated in 1996. A 1985 graduate of Louisiana State University School of Law, Mr. Hebert is a partner with Milling Benson Woodward, LLP, a New Orleans-based law firm with an office in Lafayette. His primary areas of practice include consulting and litigation in the areas of employment law, telecommunications, information technology law, public utility law, municipal law, construction law, business disputes and governmental relations. The City-Parish Attorney is responsible for providing legal representation and support services to all areas of the City-Parish Government, and includes serving as chief legal advisor to the City-Parish President, Consolidated Council and all governmental departments, commissions, offices and agencies; reporting directly to the City-Parish President as appropriate relative to the legal matters of the City-Parish Government. He represents LCG in all legal proceedings and other matters, prepares or approves contracts or other agreements to which LCG or any of its departments, commissions, offices or agencies is a party, directs the activities of the Legal Department and its staff in order to discharge the duties assigned to

the City-Parish Attorney; meeting its staffing needs with part-time contract attorneys who serve as Assistant City-Parish Attorneys. Mr. Hebert works through the City Prosecutor's office to prosecute all matters brought before Lafayette City Court, and generating positive results through effective legal representation.

**October 18<sup>th</sup> at the Petroleum Club  
12:00 Noon - 1:30 p.m.**

**Attorney Kenneth D. St. Pe' -**

**"Nursing Home Abuse & Neglect:  
Fighting for Justice for the  
Victims of Nursing Home Abuse".**

*"When entrusting a nursing home with the care of a cherished loved one, you have the legitimate expectation that you can trust them to provide exceptional care and respect"*

Source: [www.guillotstpe.com](http://www.guillotstpe.com)

Mr. St. Pe' is a partner at the Lafayette law firm of Guilliot & St. Pe'. Open to questions from the floor, Mr. St. Pe' may discuss such issues as evaluating and addressing accountability; the impact of State and National activity on nursing home litigation; common types of claims being filed and litigated; initial considerations and pre-trial procedures; effective discovery in nursing home litigation; ethical considerations related to nursing home malpractice, and; issues involved in taking a case to trial.

**November 15<sup>th</sup> at the  
John M. Shaw United States Courthouse  
At 12:00 Noon**

**Cathy Bacon, Divisional Manager,  
Lafayette Division, U.S. District Court,  
Western District of Louisiana.**

**"The Electronic Courtroom: An Update"**

This brown-bag seminar will be held in one of the Courtrooms at the Federal Courthouse in Lafayette. The session will provide an update on the various aspects of the E-filing technology available in Federal Court, and the advantages and guidelines of Electronic Case Filings (ECF).

### CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

**December 15<sup>th</sup>**

**At 12:00 Noon at À La Carte Café**

Join us as we celebrate the season of Christmas. We are promised to have a glorious feast along with door prizes and a fun filled time at LPA's annual Christmas Luncheon which will be held on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at À La Carte Cafe at noon. As in previous years LPA will sponsor our *Acadiana Youth Project* to fill the wish lists obtained from children residing at *The Childrens Shelters of Acadiana Youth*.

-Kaye Pooler, CWCP, CMSP

## WHAT HAVE YOU MISSED?

Haven't been able to attend the LPA Monthly Luncheon Seminars? Here's a look at what you've missed.



Paula Bertuccini & her paralegal Dana Sosa

**Attorney Paula Bertuccini  
Presenting:  
Medical Malpractice  
Tuesday, August 23, 2011**



**Attorney Susan Theal  
Presenting:  
Preparing for the Hearing Officer  
Conference in Family Court  
Tuesday, July 19, 2011**



Jodie Viguerie & Greg Guidry

**Atty. Greg Guidry  
Presenting:  
Significant Developments  
in Labor and Employment Law  
June 21, 2011**



Jimmie W. Murvin & Debbie Billiot

**Jimmie W. Murvin, ACP, LCP  
Presenting:  
How Ethics "Stuff" Happens  
Tuesday, May 24, 2011**



Franchesca L. Hamilton-Acker & Jodie Viguerie

**The New System of Representation for Children in Child in Need of Care Cases**

Presented by  
Franchesca L. Hamilton-Acker  
Attorney at Law  
Acadiana Legal Service Corp.  
April 19, 2011



Jodie Viguerie & Matthew Lane

**Seven Ways Social Security Disability Law Affects YOUR Clients**

Presented by:  
Matthew D. Lane, Jr.  
Ziegler & Lane, LLC  
March 22, 2011

**LPA SCHOLARSHIP**

Scholarship applications will be accepted between November 15th and December 31st and are considered in the order in which they are received. The application process includes a letter of intent and a current resume. Funds are to be distributed in the maximum amount of \$250.00 per scholarship. See LPA website at [www.lpa-la.org](http://www.lpa-la.org) for more information.



**36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NALA CONFERENCE**

LPA members, Deborah Fontenot, CLA and Jessie Cormier, CP, LCP traveled to Plano/Dallas, Texas in July to attend NALA's 36th Annual Conference. All meetings, continuing education, exhibits and other activities were held at the Dallas/Plano Marriott on July 27 - 30, 2011. Nearly 350 paralegals from all over the United States attended the nation's largest annual gathering of paralegals.

Karen Greer McGee, ACP of Shreveport, LA, (a member of the Louisiana State Paralegal Association) was re-elected NALA President and officially took office along with the rest of the new officers and directors at installation ceremonies on Friday evening. Jessie Cormier, CP, LCP as NALA Liaison officer represented the Louisiana State Paralegal Association by attending round table discussions, membership meetings, presentations by LEAP class graduates and other activities. Deborah Fontenot, CP, attended the Corporate Law Institute, in which each day's session builds on the previous day's study.

Announcements made at the convention include a new membership benefit for NALA members: upon renewal of their membership, each will receive an \$80 certificate for any of NALA's educational products including NALA Campus Live online continuing education.

NALA publishes a bimonthly magazine called Facts & Findings. All members of an affiliated association, such as LSPA, who are not a member of NALA, may now subscribe at only \$25.00 per year. Subscription information is available at [www.nala.org](http://www.nala.org) but payment must be submitted through LSPA.

The entire convention is filled with activities and opportunities to meet and get to know NALA officers, committee chairpersons and NALA staff as well as paralegals from all parts of the U.S. Next year's Convention and Educational Institutes will be held in Omaha, Nebraska. Attending the NALA Annual Meeting and Convention is always a stimulating and motivating experience. I hope that you will consider attending a NALA Annual Conference in the future.

-Jessie Cormier, CP, LCP

Photo to Left:

The NALA convention featured exhibits by affiliated associations including LSPA. Jessie Cormier, CP, LCP, as LSPA's representative, set up an exhibit called "Paralegals are always Swamped". T-shirts with that theme may be purchased from LSPA. An order form is available on LSPA's website [www.la-paralegals.org](http://www.la-paralegals.org).

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE WAS REPRINTED FROM 'THE PARALEGAL MENTOR'. IF YOU ENJOY THIS ARTICLE, YOU MAY WANT TO SUBSCRIBE TO 'THE PARALEGAL MENTOR' AT [www.paralegalmentor.com](http://www.paralegalmentor.com). THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR THIS WONDERFUL E-NEWSLETTER.

**Top 5 Ways to Minimize Interruptions**

By Vicki Voisin, ACP

Reprinted from the Feb. 24, 2011 issue of "The Paralegal Mentor"

How can you get your work done if you have constant interruptions? You can't...and it's very frustrating.

You have to practice self-defense when it comes to interruptions. If you don't take steps to minimize them, your time will be wasted and your productivity will suffer.

Studies show that the average worker is interrupted every eight minutes. The same studies reveal that 15% of the interruptions are important, while the remaining 85% are a waste of time.

Telephone calls and e-mail are major culprits, but even worse are the two-legged interrupters: your co-workers.

Here are five tips to minimize those two-legged interruptions and keep you in the productivity fast lane:

1. **Stand up when someone enters your workspace....**or when they've overstayed their welcome. When you stand, you send a message that the meeting will either be brief or that it has ended. This works every time. You start moving, they start moving...end of interruption.
2. **Never ask "How are you?"** when someone stops by your office. This is an open invitation to chat. Do you really want to hear about their gallbladder surgery? Instead, ask "What can I do for you?" This will get you right to the point of the interruption.
3. **A bit of creative workspace re-organization goes a long way.** If your desk faces the door, turn it so you don't look right into the hallway at everyone who passes. Once they make eye contact, they always stop to chat.

Can you remove your chairs? If not, stack some files on them so the office pest (IE time waster) can't take root for a half hour of blah blah blah. Last, NEVER have

a bowl of candy on your desk. Who can resist a handful of M&M's...and a little conversation to go along with them?

4. If you're asked to answer a 'quick question or someone wants 'just a minute' of your time, beware! Your first question should be, "How much time do you need?" If you have the time available, go for it and hold them to the deadline. If you don't have a spare fifteen minutes, schedule an appointment with them later.

Rehearse a few lines like: "I'm sorry but I need to finish this deposition summary in the next hour. Can we talk later?" or "Attorney X is waiting for this research. I can spend some time with you at 2:00 this afternoon." If you use lines like these, you've turned the tables and you're now meeting on your own terms.

5. Urge co-workers to accumulate their questions. They should save all but urgent issues to discuss with you in one chunk of time. It's much more productive to spend twenty minutes discussing five client matters than it is to talk about one client matter for ten minutes every hour.

**BONUS TIP: Don't interrupt yourself!** Determine the time of day you are most productive (early morning? mid-afternoon?) and make yourself unavailable to the world during that time every day. Shut your door. Turn off anything that might be noisy or distracting. Stock your desk with all the supplies you need to eliminate unnecessary trips to the supply room. Practice what you preach: gather your questions and assignments and interrupt your co-workers only once.

**Your challenge:** Make a short list of the interruptions you *will* allow. For all the rest, decide which of today's tips you can implement to minimize them. Once that decision is made, take the necessary steps to curb those interruptions and you'll find yourself on your way to a more productive day.

Vicki Voisin, "The Paralegal Mentor", delivers simple strategies for paralegals and other professionals to create success and satisfaction by setting goals and determining the direction they will take their careers. Vicki spotlights resources, organizational tips, ethics issues, and other areas of continuing education to help paralegals and others reach their full potential. She publishes a *Paralegal Strategies*, a weekly newsletter for paralegals and co-hosts *The Paralegal Voice*, a monthly podcast produced by Legal Talk Network.

More information is available at [www.paralegalmentor.com](http://www.paralegalmentor.com) where subscribers receive Vicki's *151 Tips for Your Career Success*.

## LAFAYETTE PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION THANKS ITS SUSTAINING MEMBERS



**Benjamin J. Pooler II**  
Pooler Consultants Ltd.  
*Safety Expert*

Please visit the  
"Sustaining Members"  
page on our website:  
[www.lpa-la.org](http://www.lpa-la.org)  
and visit the Sustaining  
Members' websites  
by clicking on their logo.