



Roanoke Valley Paralegal Association

P.O. Box 1505, Roanoke, Virginia 24007

<http://www.rvpa.org>

MARCH 2011
Edition

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And now, a word from our President.....

First and foremost, Happy New Year to Everyone! I would like to start off by recognizing our out-going President, Colleen Doyle, for a job well done in 2010. Colleen worked very hard for our organization last year and we appreciate her efforts. I am honored to follow in her footsteps and thank her for her guidance as I take over the role of President for 2011. Thank you Colleen!

I am excited about this coming year. Your Board has been hard at work on various programs and initiatives for 2011. We are mixing things up a bit this year, beginning with the relocation of our monthly meetings to Blue 5 Restaurant in Downtown Roanoke. Blue 5 offers not only a change of scenery, but also a larger meeting space to accommodate our growing membership.

An organization is only as strong as its members, and in order for us to succeed we need your input! I would love to hear from each of you about what you would like to see from RVPA in 2011. We welcome your ideas, feedback and suggestions – good and bad! Is there a topic you would like to hear about at a monthly meeting? Maybe an organization you think could use our help? Let us know! Your Board is here to serve you and help you grow in your profession. Please feel free to contact any one of us at any time with your thoughts and ideas. I look forward to working with all of you in 2011!

- Kara

RVPA is now on Facebook! Become a fan and/or member to see all of the upcoming meeting and event information. Invite your paralegal/legal assistant friends and colleagues to become our friend.

Facebook is updated on a regular basis and provides RVPA members with all of the latest RVPA news and information.

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/group.php?gid=327204826804>

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CLE Committee



Upcoming Speakers:

Lori Jones Bentley, Esquire – Partner at Johnson, Ayers & Matthews. Lori is our featured speaker for the month of March. She will present “Social Security Numbers: When and Where to use, and *not* use, them in your pleadings.”

Community Relations



We are currently looking for opportunities to support organizations in our local area. If you belong to or support an organization or group that is in need of volunteer work, send an email to Kara at kkotermanski@jamlaw.net.

Finance Committee



Just a reminder if you have not submitted your 2011 membership renewal application and dues to Beth Reed, please do so as soon as possible so that you will qualify to participate in this year’s Rewards Program and receive the discounted lunch price!

Membership Committee



RVPA Welcomes New Members!

If you haven’t joined or are interested in joining our organization, please contact our Secretary, Beth Reed, at reeddome@verizon.net or 540.580.4376, for more information.

Social Committee



We are planning a Social for sometime in July / August! Stay tuned for more details in the coming months!

Our Annual Holiday Social is scheduled for December 8, 2011, at Noon, location to be determined.



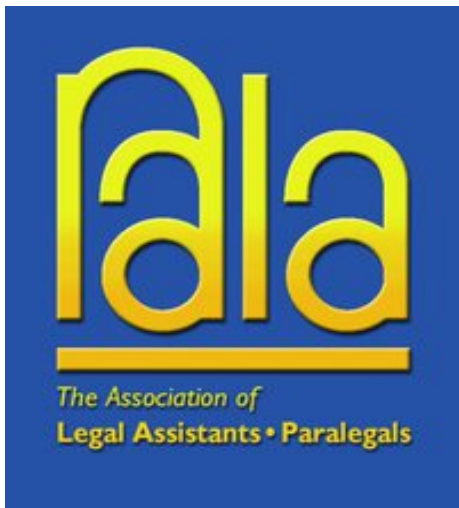
VAPA Report
reported by Lisa Woodson
VAPA Liaison

Next meeting is scheduled for:

Saturday, March 18, 2011 in Charlottesville, Virginia

Virginia Alliance of Paralegal Associations
VAPA Semi-Annual Seminar
October 10-13, 2012

For more information visit: <http://www.vaparalegalalliance.org/events>



NALA Report
reported by Colleen Doyle
NALA Liaison

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Mark Your Calendar Now: July 27-30, 2011 – Dallas, Texas



For 2011 CLE Opportunities via “NALA Campus Live!,” visit our website at www.rvpa.org and click on the VAPA & NALA tab for a list of upcoming programs!



**Lambda Epsilon Chi (LEX)
The National Honor Society in Paralegal/Legal Assistant Studies.**

**Lambda Epsilon Chi (LEX)
c/o American Association for Paralegal Education
19 Mantua Road
Mt. Royal, NJ 08061
(856) 423-2829 Fax: (856) 423-3420
E-mail: info@aafpe.org**

**For a list of Paralegal Schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia,
visit www.rvpa.org under the Newsletter tab!**

How to Choose a Paralegal Program

Here are some important factors to consider in evaluating the quality of paralegal programs:

- ❖ Is the program ABA Approved?
- ❖ What is the reputation of the institution and the paralegal program?
- ❖ What services are offered to students?
- ❖ What facilities are available to students?
- ❖ What activities are available to students?
- ❖ What is the mission of the institution and what are the goals of the paralegal program?
- ❖ What is the content and nature of the curriculum?
- ❖ What are the graduation requirements?
- ❖ What are the backgrounds of the program director and faculty?
- ❖ What are the special considerations of enrolling in a distance education program?

The Paralegal Mentor

Strategies for Paralegals Seeking Excellence by Vicki Voisin, aka The Paralegal Mentor

Vicki Voisin, "The Paralegal Mentor," delivers simple strategies for paralegals and other professionals to create success and satisfaction by achieving 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 weekly ezine titled **Paralegal Strategies**. More information is available at www.paralegalmentor.com.

The No. 1 Myth You Should Never Believe

Myth: Once you have your paralegal education and your job as a paralegal, you don't have to do anything else to have a successful, fulfilling paralegal career.

Truth: Your paralegal job and education are just the foundation for your career. That foundation simply serves as a facilitator for the rest of your career, much the same way a blank canvas serves as the facilitator for a beautiful portrait.

While your job may be interesting, time-consuming and challenging, it is not the sum total of your career. Consider my situation for a moment:

My entire working life has been spent in a small law office in a very small town. This has been a job I've enjoyed immensely. The attorneys would come and go...and name of the firm would change...but I remained like a favorite old shoe: reliable, durable...and also knowledgeable.

Had I remained in that comfortable cocoon, where would I be today? Probably preparing to retire with a cheese and cracker reception attended by people I've known all my life...wonderful people, I might add.

Instead of choosing that cocoon, I chose to make my world large and if I were to retire today (and I'm NOT!) I could at least expect good wishes from paralegals from every state in the U.S.

How do you make your world large? Here are some tips for you:

Never stop learning. If you follow the Thirteen Questions column in *Paralegal Strategies*, you'll notice that everyone says that to make your career interesting, you must never stop learning. This includes new technology, new systems, and new areas of the law.

Accept challenges. If you think you can't speak before a large group of people or that you could

never write an article for a professional journal, you're dead wrong. But how will you know what you can do if you don't try? When you're asked to do this, always jump at the chance. What if you're not asked? Volunteer! You'll always be glad you did.

Join groups and participate. Joining groups (professional associations in particular) is like throwing a pebble into a pool of water and watching the ripples widen. You will widen your circle of acquaintances (who will probably become best friends!) as well as your professional network.

You will be surprised at your capacity for growth. The ripples spread even wider when you take an active part, run for office, serve on a committee, and attend annual meetings. Wide ripples are good for your career.

Write and speak. Considering your capacity for growth, you will be shocked by the words that will come from your mouth and flow from your pen as you expand your horizons.

Get out of your comfort zone. When I traveled just from tiny Charlevoix to Detroit to join a professional association, I might as well have been traveling to Mars! Today, I can maneuver most any travel and enjoy it immensely. You can do this, too, but you have to take chances and leave your cocoon.

Your career is always a work in process. It doesn't happen all at once. In fact, it takes a lifetime. As you take the steps above (and there are many others, you will be painting on the canvas where the brush strokes illustrate the bright colors you've chosen for yourself.

Your challenge? Consider the steps above and choose at least one challenge. This will be your first step in painting the gorgeous picture that will, in the end, be your outstanding career.