



# NCPA



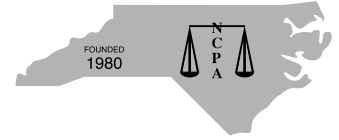
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Affiliate Member  
of the  
National Association  
of Legal Assistants, Inc.

Spring 2012

North Carolina Paralegal Association, Inc.

# Forum

*noun* [C]; *för-əm*  
an occasion or a place for talking about a matter of public interest



## 10 Tips for Handling Those Piles of Files



### IN THIS ISSUE...

- “10 Tips for Handling Those Piles of Files”
- “How to Make Yourself Indispensable to Your Attorney”
- *NCPA Nominations & Elections - Meet the Candidates*



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Editorial Staff

Brandon Ruth, NCSB/CP  
Senior Editor

Martha L. Blackman-Hughes, ACP, NCCP  
Advertising Editor

Michele A. Tuttle, CLA, NCCP  
Patron & Sustaining Chair

Melissa Clayton Jones, NCCP  
Articles/Association News Editor

The North Carolina Paralegal Association, Inc.  
PO Box 36264, Charlotte, NC 28236-6264  
704.535.3363  
www.ncparalegal.org

brandonlruth@gmail.com  
mlblackman-hughes@nc.rr.com  
michele@barrettfirm.com  
mel\_clayton79@yahoo.com

To submit materials for publication, please send to the Senior Editor at brandonlruth@gmail.com.

For advertising and rate information for the NCPA FORUM, contact the Advertising Editor at mlblackman-hughes@nc.rr.com.

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Opinions expressed in articles and features herein are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of NCPA. The Editor strongly encourages the submission of materials for publication. The Editor reserves the right to edit material and accept or reject materials submitted.



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# Moving?

Be sure to let us know!

Send both your old and new address information to:

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## President's Message

Stephanie B. Elliott, NCCP



Happy Spring, NCPA Members!

Change is in the air! It's the time of year for cleaning out closets, spring flowers and yearly elections. As we prepare for our Annual Meeting and Seminar, I encourage you to make plans to attend the Annual Meeting and see what NCPA is doing for you. Now that the rush of the holidays is past us, and we're all struggling to keep our New Years resolutions (I know I am!), we should again commit to making our organization a stronger, louder voice in the North Carolina legal community. Want to be a part of the change? There are plenty of areas where we need help - big and small. It takes all of us working together to create new paths for NCPA to take. If you are interested in a position of leadership, it's not too late. There are several District Director and Committee Chair positions available. We are also in need of a Treasurer as our current Treasurer, Ann Rogers, will rotate off the board this year. Please e-mail me or Stephanie Ivans for more information.

The NCPA bus tour is in full swing, with the first stop at UNCC on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Stops at Gaston College, CPCC, and Meredith are also being planned. The mission of the bus tour is to promote membership in NCPA to paralegal students across North Carolina, and to specifically promote our Mentor Program. As you may already be aware, NCPA has been asked to make a presentation for the 2012 NALA Affiliated Associations Meeting, to be held in Omaha Nebraska. NCPA's presentation is entitled "Shaping the Future: NCPA's Mentoring Program". The presentation will feature the bus tour as the launching vehicle for the mentoring program.

I'm excited and revitalized by all the exciting possibilities we have in store for us, and I hope that you will make your plans now to attend the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting and Seminar. Make your plans now to book a room and register!

See you in Wrightsville Beach!

*Stephanie B. Elliott, NCCP*  
President

*Volunteerism is the voice of the people put into action. These actions shape and mold the present into a future of which we can all be proud. ~Helen Dyer*

## Chairman's Message

Stephanie Ivans, NCCP



Greetings to all! I can't believe another year has come and gone already. It seems like time flies, as Spring is just around the corner! It has been an amazing privilege to serve NCPA as Chairman of the Board this past year. I have truly enjoyed getting to know so many of you!

It has been my pleasure to work with all the District Directors this past year and I would like to thank each of them for their dedication to NCPA and the paralegal profession! District Directors are committed volunteers responsible for voicing your concerns/suggestions to the Board and Executive Committee and promoting NCPA within their district by providing members with networking opportunities both socially and professionally. NCPA is currently in need of a Director for District IV. (Please see a district map on our website for a list of counties in that district) If you live in that area, I would like to encourage you to consider volunteering your time to serve NCPA as a District Director! At our Annual Meeting in March, a Director for this district will be appointed. If you are interested in the position, please email me at [wncparalegal@gmail.com](mailto:wncparalegal@gmail.com) for more details.

I would like to leave you with the words of Helen Keller, who said "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much". A big "Thanks!" to each member for your continued support of NCPA! Let's make 2012 another great year!

I hope to see all of you at our Annual Meeting and Seminar, March 22-24, at Wrightsville Beach!!

Sincerely,

*Stephanie Ivans, NCCP*  
Chairman of the Board



## Second Vice President's Report Membership

Beverly K. Moore, NCCP

The current membership breakdown as of January 26, 2012 is as follows:

General members:	278
Associate members:	61
Student members:	95
Sustaining Members:	11
Affiliate members:	3
Educational Program members:	4
Total	452

We would like to acknowledge our newest (G)eneral, (A)ssociate, and (S)tudent members joining from Oct. 27, 2011 - Jan. 26, 2012.

Kathleen E. Abbott (G) - Arden, NC  
Christine Lee Anderson (S) - Holly Springs, NC  
Aissatou Barry (A) - Durham, NC  
Elizabeth M. Brewer (S) - Durham, NC  
Catelin Colleen Brown (A) - Wake Forest, NC  
Lori L. Charnoplosky (G) - Raleigh, NC  
Marsha R. Moore (S) - Zebulon, NC

Maureen A. Murtagh Fernandez (G) - Greensboro, NC  
Rhonda M. O'Dell (A) - Kernersville, NC  
Tonya Raleigh (S) - Greensboro, NC  
Simone Odessa Stewart (S) - Greenville, NC  
Jamie C. Tomosunas (S) - Hillsborough, NC  
Dani Wisch (S) - Matthews, NC

NCPA is proud to recognize the following Sustaining members:

4NC Records, CaseWorks, Chapel Hill Court Reporting, Diamond Eye Legal, Envision Discovery, Huseby, Inc., Incorporating Services, Ltd., Kay McGovern & Associates, Lawyers Mutual Liability Insurance of NC, Legal Media Experts, National Digital Forensics, Inc., and Ruffin Consulting, Inc.



NCPA would also like to recognize our Affiliate and Educational Program members:

Alamance County Paralegal Association, Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute, Carteret Community College Paralegal Technology Program, Cumberland County Paralegal Association, Guilford Paralegal Association, Guilford Technical Community College, Miller-Motte College-Wilmington

Feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions about membership in NCPA.

Beverly K. Moore, NCCP  
Second Vice President, Membership Chair





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This issue kicks off my third year as Senior Editor of the NCPA FORUM, and we're still plugging away doing what we can to make sure you get the most current and beneficial information to keep you up on all the happenings in our profession. I continue to receive positive e-mails from members after each issue.

## Editor's Court

Brandon L. Ruth, NCSB/CP

Over the past year our Articles Editor, Melissa Clayton Jones, has made sure each issue is packed with fantastic

content, and of course all our regular contributing members that help make FORUM what it is today. Hopefully in 2012 we can catch the eye of a new advertisers, and continue to make the FORUM a "must-read" for all North Carolina legal professionals.

In keeping with previous Spring issues, this issue will feature a rundown of changes in the laws that took effect recently, and hopefully some of the changes mentioned in this issue

will be helpful to you. As always, if there have been any statutory or case law driven change in your specific area of law that was not referenced in this issue, please write to us and let us know, and we will be sure to mention it in our next issue. This issue will also provide tips on making yourself indispensable to your attorney and some ways to handle those piles of files that always seem to build up and block our view of the other side of the desk. Finally, we would like to welcome Incorporating Services, Ltd as a new Sustaining Member. Please check out their ad and see if what they have to offer is right for you.

As always, please be sure to check out the Calendar of Events, and don't forget to register for our 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting and Seminar, coming up on March 22-24 at the Holiday Inn Resorts in Wrightsville Beach. I had a phenomenal time the last time Annual was held there, and I'm looking forward to going back! The schedule of events and registration form are posted in this issue, as well as on the NCPA web site, and it should be a great weekend. I hope to see everyone there!

Regards,

*Brandon L. Ruth, NCSB/CP*



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## MPA

# *Paralegal of the Year Award* **Nominations**

The Metrolina Paralegal Association in Charlotte is now accepting nominations for the MPA Paralegal of the Year Award. The award is given to a paralegal who has exhibited a commitment to professionalism and to the advancement of the legal community. Nominations are due by Friday, March 30, 2012. For more information including the eligibility criteria and nomination form, go to the MPA website, <http://www.charlotteareaparalegals.com/pdf/MPA-2012-Paralegal-of-the-Year-Award.pdf>.



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## 2012 Annual Meeting and Seminar

*presented by the*

**North Carolina  
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**Attention all  
CLAs & CPs**

### Make plans to attend the CLA/CP Breakfast

Saturday, March 24, 2011  
8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

***Karen McGee, ACP***  
*NALA President*

**Will be our guest speaker**



**Cost is \$20 and includes a breakfast buffet.  
Register on your seminar registration form.**

## NALA NEWS

**By Kaye Summers, NCPA NALA Liaison**

As I wind up my year as your NALA Liaison, I would first like to say – boy it has been a busy year. I have enjoyed serving as your NALA Liaison and have declared my candidacy for 2012-2013 as well.

I attended the NALA Annual Meeting and Seminar in Dallas, TX in July along with our President, Stephanie Elliott, NCCP, and several other members of NCPA. North Carolina was well represented and it really made me proud of our state and our organization.

I was shocked and humbled to be awarded the 2011 Affiliates Award, an award given by NALA based on submissions from the affiliate associations. Again, I wish to thank all of you as members of NCPA for believing in me, and supporting me throughout my many years serving as a member of the NCPA Board.

On behalf of NCPA, I submitted our Mentor Program to be included in the NALA Affiliate Exchange Program. This program affords the selected affiliate association an opportunity to highlight the important work that it is doing throughout the state to support and improve the paralegal profession. I am happy to say that our Mentor Program was chosen by NALA to be presented to the affiliate associations at the Affiliate Associations Meeting held at the NALA Annual Meeting and Seminar in Omaha, Nebraska in July.

Here is a copy of the e-mail notice that I received from NALA announcing the selection:

I am delighted to advise that your association's Affiliate Exchange presentation entitled "Shaping the Future: NCPA's Mentoring Program" has been selected as the presentation for the 2012 NALA Affiliated Associations Meeting. The program has been scheduled for a 30-minute presentation on Thursday afternoon, July 26<sup>th</sup> at the Hilton Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska.

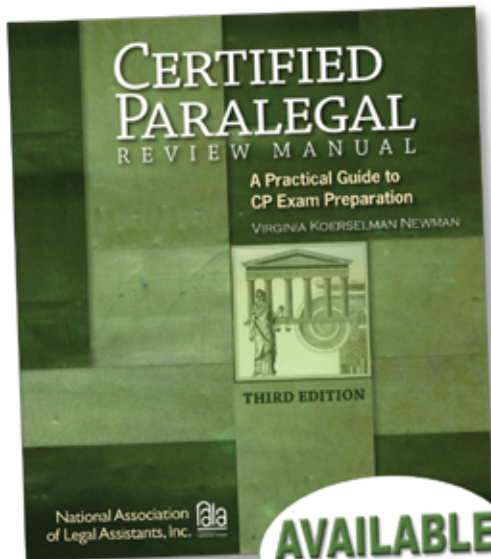
We commend you for your contribution to the 2012 NALA Affiliated Associations Meeting. I am really looking forward to hearing your presentation, and believe it will be an excellent addition to our convention offerings. See you in Omaha!

Debra L. Overstreet ACP  
NALA Affiliated Associations Director

Stephanie Elliott, NCCP and I will be attending the conference and presenting the program on behalf of NCPA (and Patti Clapper, ACP, NCCP if we can get her on an airplane).

I look forward to seeing everyone at our Annual Meeting and Seminar at Wrightsville Beach in March.

***Newly revised and thoroughly updated, this is a must-have resource for anyone preparing to take the NALA CLA/CP Exam!***



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- Positive test performance suggestions, including tips for controlling stress and answering specific types of questions.
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# 10 Tips

## for Handling Those Piles of Files

By: Vicki Voision, ACP

**Ideally, you work on one matter at a time** with only materials relating to that one matter on your desk. The key here is 'ideally.'

This principle might work in a perfect world, but the legal environment is far from perfect. A paralegal's real world includes deadlines, chaos, interruptions, emergencies (actual and imagined), last minute projects, trials and, worst of all, other people's disorganization.

**Piles, often not of our doing, become part of the landscape of your desk.** You start one project, another is dumped on you, then another, and eventually you're working in layers. It's amazing that paralegals remain productive at all. If it weren't for our innate abilities to organize and prioritize...as well as juggle...productivity would be nonexistent.

**What can you do to deal with this madness?** Here are 10 tips that will help you remain organized through the chaos and come very close to having only one file on your desk at a time:

- 1. Place files in an incline file sorter.** Instead of piling files on top of each other so that you can barely tell one from the other, stand them in an incline file sorter on or near your desk. With this simple organizational tool, you'll be able to locate files in a snap. This is particularly helpful for files you'll be working on in the next day or so.
- 2. Take only what you need to get the job done.** Encourage fellow workers (as in the attorney(s) you work with) to give you only as much of the file as is necessary to complete an assignment. For instance, you don't need the client's entire red rope file to schedule three IME's in that Work Comp case. If you have a deposition to summarize, you'll probably only need the transcript.
- 3. Try to control when you're given work.** Receiving work all day long as the spirit moves your boss is inefficient. Instead, try to schedule regular meetings with your boss, such as first thing in the morning and/or immediately after lunch. At those meetings, you should receive work assignments, discuss any assignments you are working on, etc.
- 4. Create temporary files.** If an assignment is accompanied only by a loose letter or document, make a temporary file for it. Use a Sharpie to write enough information on the label or on the front so that the item can be easily identified and won't be lost in

## 10 Tips for Handling Those Piles of Files - continued

the next wave of files that appear on your desk. Put this temporary file in the incline file sorter until you're ready to work on it.

**5. Become an instant decision maker.** When an assignment, a document or a file comes into your office, decide immediately how to deal with it. Never place it in the 'put it here for now' pile. That pile will just continue to grow.

If whatever you've been given to do won't take long, take care of it right then and there. You've already been interrupted so you might as well complete the task before you go back to your work. If you don't need to do it immediately, put it away, or place it in the incline file sorter.

Do you have a stack of professional journals, magazines and newspapers on your desk that you intend to read 'some day'? Unfortunately, the stack keeps growing and 'some day' never comes. Again, review those materials as soon as they come into your office. If there's an article you want to keep, tear it out and file it. If there's nothing of interest, throw the material away or recycle it. Remember that most of this information is available on the Internet should you need it so there's probably no need to keep articles.

**6. Prioritize throughout the day.** As work comes in, make a decision about when you will act on it. Don't just put it in a pile to think about later. If you allow the chaos to accumulate, it will quickly overwhelm you. The disorder may stop you from getting your work done because it's such a mess you don't know where to start. The perfectionist in you will just give up. It's easier to make a phone call or check your email than to figure what's in that swelling stack of papers and files.

**7. Ask for clear deadlines.** Your work will probably fall into one of three categories: do it right now, do it in the next few days and do it sometime in the future.

- **Do it right now.** Close up what you are working on, place the material in the incline file sorter, and begin the new work. This interruption is not the most efficient but it's the way the real world operates.
- **Do it in the next few days.** Note the deadline in your planner or on your calendar and place the file in the incline file sorter.
- **Do it sometime in the future.** If something isn't due for a couple of weeks, you're probably safe to put it away in the file drawer. However, be sure to make a note on your calendar when the work has to be done and when you should begin working on it.

**8. Never trust your memory!** Take copious notes when someone gives you an assignment but do not use sticky notes! Sticky notes just multiply and either get lost or you become so accustomed to them that you don't even see them. Instead, use a shorthand notebook for your notes. Begin a fresh page every day, placing the date at the top. On the left side of the line, write the name of the client, client number, or whatever information you need to identify the work you'll be doing. On the right side of the page, make your notes.



## 10 Tips for Handling Those Piles of Files - continued

Again, be sure to ask for clear deadlines. If you do receive an assignment with a deadline of two or more weeks away, you'll probably want to put the file away so that it's not taking up space on your desk for days on end. Be sure to enter a reminder on your calendar for the date you need to begin working on the project. Never put a file out of sight in a drawer without a reminder to yourself to do that work. The adage 'out of sight, out of mind' applies when you're very busy.

**9. Get those files back to their 'owners'!** As soon as you finish a project, move those files off your desk. Don't let them languish there for one minute more than you need them. If they can be closed, all the better.

**10. Establish routines.** The importance of establishing routines for beginning and ending your work day can't be overstated.

**At the beginning of your day,** review your list of work to do, retrieve the file you will work on first and get going. As other files come to you throughout the day, either put them in your file cabinet or in the incline file sorter. Remember that your floor and client chair do not qualify as file cabinets.

**At the end of the work day,** consider what has to be done during the next one and make a quick list. No. 1 on the list should be the most pressing work, the work with a deadline. Prioritize your work this way.

Then close up the work you're doing and either (a) leave the file on your desk or (b) put it in the incline file. You might flag it with a bright sticky note (a sticky note is a good thing when you're using it this way).

Your desk will be cleared and you will not be welcomed by chaos and overwhelm when you begin the next day.

**Your challenge:** Consider the 10 tips above and decide which you can incorporate into your daily routine. While you may never quite accomplish having only one thing on your desk at a time, you can minimize the chaos, disorder and confusion by taking even one or two of these steps. Whatever you choose to do, you're bound to improve your workspace and increase your productivity.

=====

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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 e-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*.

*The  
Metrolina Paralegal  
Association*

# scholarship contest



The Metrolina Paralegal Association is currently accepting essays for its scholarship contest. The winning student will receive a \$250 scholarship. All essays are due by March 16, 2012. For more information on eligibility and requirements, go to the MPA website at <http://www.charlotteareaparalegals.com/pdf/MPA250.pdf>

## ATTENTION:

The CLA/CP EXAM is now computer based. Below is updated information on testing and deadlines!

Testing Window	Application Deadline	Late Application fee (w/\$25 late filing fee)
May 1-31	April 1	April 10

For further details see  
NALA News on our website or contact our  
NCPA NALA Liaison Kaye H. Summers, ACP, NCCP  
at [kaye@pulleywatson.com](mailto:kaye@pulleywatson.com)

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## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### Thursday, March 22, 2012

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

#### **Early Registration & Exhibitor Exposition**

*Join us in welcoming our Exhibitors with light hors d'oeuvres.*

### Friday, March 23, 2012

7:30 - 8:15 a.m.

#### **Registration & Continental Breakfast**

8:15 - 8:30 a.m.

#### **Welcome Remarks**

Stephanie Brooks Elliott, NCCP, NCPA President

8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

#### **GENERAL SESSION**

##### **“Websites No Paralegal Should Be Without”**

Patricia F. Clapper, ACP, NCCP

9:30 - 9:45 a.m.

#### **Break - Visit with Exhibitors**

9:45 - 10:45 a.m.

#### **CONCURRENT SESSION A**

##### **“Updates on E-Discovery (NC Amended Civil Procedure) and Digital Forensics”**

Giovanni Masucci

National Digital Forensics

#### **CONCURRENT SESSION B**

##### **“The Rules, They are A-Changin” (Personal Injury)**

Mark Scruggs, Attorney

Lawyers Mutual

10:45 - 11:00 a.m.

#### **Break – Visit with Exhibitors**

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

#### **CONCURRENT SESSION A**

##### **“Service of Process In and Out of State and Tips on How to Locate People”**

Jennifer McCracken

Diamond Eye Legal

#### **CONCURRENT SESSION B**

##### **“2011 Revisions to Probate Code”**

Paula Kohut, Attorney

Kohut Law Firm

12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

#### **LUNCH**

1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

#### **GENERAL SESSION**

##### **“How to Make a Difference in the Law Practice You Support”**

The Honorable Richard B. Abernethy

Gaston County District Court Judge

2:30 - 3:00 p.m.

#### **Break/Set Up for Annual Meeting**

3:00 - 3:15 p.m.

#### **Registration for Annual Meeting**

3:15 - 5:30 p.m.

#### **Annual Meeting – Election of Officers**

6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

#### **Dinner & Introduction of Officers for 2012-2013**

##### **“Professional Development and Leadership”**

Karen McGee, ACP, NALA President



**Saturday, March 24, 2012**

8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

**CLA/CP Breakfast (NALA Certified CLAs and CPs only)**  
Karen McGee, ACP; NALA President

8:30 - 9:00 a.m.

**Continental Breakfast for non CLAs/CPs**

9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

**CONCURRENT SESSION A**  
**Litigation/Corporate Topic, TBA**

The Honorable Thomas Taylor  
Gaston County District Court Judge

**CONCURRENT SESSION B**

**“Don’t Sink the Ship – Recognizing Title and Closing Pitfalls”**

Susan Benoit & Lance Borseman, Attorneys  
The Law Offices of Hutchens, Senter and Britton

10:00 - 10:30 a.m.

**Break (Hotel Checkout)**

10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

**CONCURRENT SESSION A**  
**“Navigating the Foreclosure Process”**

J. Chris Huff, Attorney  
The Law Office of Hutchens, Senter and Britton

**CONCURRENT SESSION B**

**“When to File for Bankruptcy”**

Joe Vonnegut, Attorney  
The Law Office of Hutchens, Senter and Britton

11:30 - 11:45 a.m.

**Break**

11:45 a.m.- 12:45 p.m.

**GENERAL SESSION**

**“Old-Fashioned Ethics in a Newfangled World”**

Lynne J. DeVenny Craig, NCCP

12:45 - 1:00 p.m.

**Closing Remarks and Door Prizes**  
**(must be present to win)**

**CONTINUING LEGAL ASSISTANT EDUCATION CREDIT:****National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. (NALA):**

This seminar meets the requirements of the Certifying Board of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. for seven hours of Continuing Legal Education units toward maintenance of the Certified Legal Assistant credential.

**North Carolina State Bar Board of Paralegal Certification (NCCP):**

This seminar has also been approved by the North Carolina State Bar Board of Paralegal Certification for Continuing Paralegal Education in the amount of six hours of general CPE credits including one hour professional responsibility CPE credits. Any NC certification questions should be directed to the North Carolina State Bar's Paralegal Certification Board.

**REFUNDS:**

- If we receive your request by March 13, 2012, we will issue you a full refund, less a \$10.00 cancellation fee.
- If we receive your request between March 14, 2012 and March 19, 2012, we will issue a 50% refund.
- If we receive your request after March 20, 2012, no refund will be issued.
- You must notify the Registration Chair, Chreatha A. Alston, NCCP at (919) 807-7225.
- Refunds are not issued until after the seminar is completed.

**DISCOUNTS:**

Law offices or corporations with three (3) or more paralegals attending the seminar, or three (3) or more paralegal students registering simultaneously, will be entitled to receive a 10% discount on the registration fee only. Discount does not apply to additional lunch or dinner tickets, CLA breakfast, or manuscript purchase. **Registration forms and fees must be received simultaneously to ensure proper credit for discount.** **Online registration is not eligible for the discount – you must submit paper registration forms.**

**MANUSCRIPTS:**

NCPA will provide each attendee with a written manuscript upon check in at registration. If you are not able to attend and would like to purchase the manuscript, you may purchase one from our website after the seminar is concluded.

**HOTEL INFORMATION:**

**Room Rates:** Rooms rates are \$119.00 (for a standard room) and \$139.00 (for an oceanfront room), plus tax; deadline for hotel reservations is **FEBRUARY 29, 2012**. When calling to make a reservation, please be sure to designate that you are attending the NCPA Seminar to receive the discounted rate. After the deadline, you are not guaranteed this rate.

**Please make your own hotel reservations:**

**Via telephone:** Please call (910)-256-2231 or 1-877-330-5050 to make your reservation. Be sure to designate that you are attending the NCPA Seminar to receive the group rate. After **February 29<sup>th</sup>**, we cannot guarantee you a room or the group rate.

**REGISTRATION FORM**

NCPA's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting and Seminar  
 March 22, 2012 – March 24, 2012  
 Holiday Inn Resort, Wrightsville Beach

Registration deadline is March 13, 2012. Please add the late fee if your registration is postmarked on or after this date. Walk-ins are welcome the day of the seminar. Checks should be made payable to NCPA for the total amount of all applicable fees. Your check or credit card statement is your receipt. **We do not send confirmations.** This registration form must be completed and accompany your payment.

Return this form and your payment to: Chreatha A. Alston, NCCP  
 NCPA, Registration Chair  
 PO Box 36264  
 Charlotte, NC 28236-6264

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (This is how your name will appear on your name tag - please be sure to include any credentials such as CP or NCCP.)

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**CHECK THE CONCURRENT SESSIONS YOU WILL ATTEND:**

Friday, 9:45 a.m.	Session A _____	Session B _____	(choose ONE)
Friday, 11:00 a.m.	Session A _____	Session B _____	(choose ONE)
Saturday, 9:00 a.m.	Session A _____	Session B _____	(choose ONE)
Saturday, 10:30 a.m.	Session A _____	Session B _____	(choose ONE)

**Fees: Check all that apply:**

(Registration fee includes manuscript, Friday breakfast, Friday lunch, and Friday evening event):

- \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 160.00 NCPA or NALA Member\* (or Affiliate Member Delegate)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 245.00 Non-Member
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 65.00 NCPA or NALA Student Member\*
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 90.00 Student Non-Member (please include proof of enrollment at a paralegal school)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 125.00 Paralegal Educator
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 20.00 Additional Friday Lunch Ticket
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 25.00 Additional Friday Dinner Ticket
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 20.00 CLA/CP Breakfast (NALA certified CLAs/CPs only - please provide NALA Membership # \_\_\_\_\_)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 20.00 Late Fee (must be included if sending after 3/13/2012)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 Manuscript Only (will be mailed after seminar date)

\*If you are not an NCPA member but are a NALA member, please include a copy of your NALA membership card showing your status as an "individual member". Contributions or gifts to the North Carolina Paralegal Association, Inc. are not deductible contributions for federal income tax purposes; however, payments may qualify as ordinary and necessary business expenses.



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## THE *Director's* CHAIR

NCPA's Directors are elected by the general membership. A District Director must have been a general member for a year and reside or work within the district represented. As a Director, you serve on the Board of Directors for NCPA. Your responsibilities include attending scheduled quarterly Board meetings to offer input and vote on policies and procedures; coordinating meetings or a mini-seminar within your District; submitting information about your District for the AMICUS and FORUM; and generally being a liaison between the members of your District and NCPA.

If you are interested in serving as a Director, please email Stephanie Ivans, Chairman of the Board, at [stephanie.ivans@gmail.com](mailto:stephanie.ivans@gmail.com).

### ***DISTRICT II REPORT***

District II is going to hold a meet and greet/ Valentine's dinner on February 20<sup>th</sup>. These meet and greets present a wonderful opportunity to network within our field, as well as within your own specialty! Stay tuned for more details!

Crystal L. Robinson, District II Director  
[crystal@levineandstewart.com](mailto:crystal@levineandstewart.com)

### ***DISTRICT VII REPORT***

District VII will be holding a meet and greet in the near future. Details will be sent out by email. Stay tuned!

Stephanie Ivans, District VII Director  
[stephanie.ivans@gmail.com](mailto:stephanie.ivans@gmail.com)

### ***DISTRICT VIII REPORT***

Hello District VIII members! My name is Regina H. Newsome, CLA, NCCP, and I am Interim Director for District VIII. I have worked in the legal field for over 19 years and am currently employed as a Paralegal with the North Carolina Department of Justice/Attorney General's Office, Transportation Section, in Raleigh, North Carolina. I look forward to working with you and hopefully seeing the NCPA membership in District VIII grow this year. Please feel free to contact me at [rhnccla@gmail.com](mailto:rhnccla@gmail.com) with any comments, questions, or concerns that you may have. Thank you for your continued commitment to NCPA.

Regina H. Newsome, CLA, NCCP,  
Interim District VIII Director  
[rhnccla@gmail.com](mailto:rhnccla@gmail.com)

### ***DISTRICT VI and DISTRICT IX REPORT***

Currently Districts VI and IX do not have a local district director. District VI has 36 members and District IX has 14. Since I am in Wake County, this will make it difficult for me to be able to work with members in those Districts. If you are interested in serving as a Director, you must have been a general member for one (1) year and must be able to attend our Board meetings (this is a voting position). If you are interested, please email me for more information.

Patti Clapper, ACP, NCCP  
At-Large Director  
Immediate Past President  
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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### FEBRUARY

**February 28, 2012**

Memberships expire if not renewed

### MARCH

**March 22-24, 2012**

NCPA's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting and Seminar

**March 23, 2012**

NCPA's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Membership Meeting

### APRIL

**April 1, 2012**

Deadline to register for  
May 2012 NALA CLA Exam

**April 14, 2012**

NCCP Examination

### JULY

**July 25-28, 2012**

NALA Annual Conference in Omaha, NE

### AUGUST

**August 1, 2012**

Deadline to register for  
September 2012 NALA CLA Exam

### DECEMBER

**December 1, 2012**

Deadline to register for  
January 2013 NALA CLA Exam



# Changes in North Carolina Laws

Below is a summary of some notables changes to NC laws which took effect in the last few months:

HB 49 is also known as "Laura's Law" took effect December 1, 2011. It increases the punishment for certain DWI offenders. Laura Fortenberry was killed by repeat DWI offender who had over 100 charges in his name in just one County. (If you have the most recent NC Bar Journal, it has a great article about this.)

HB 379, effective December 1, 2011, enacts The North Carolina Interstate Depositions And Discovery Act and makes conforming amendments to the Rules of Civil Procedure.

HB 408, effective December 1, 2011, amends criminal discovery laws to require timely disclosure of information to prosecutors and to provide for better protection for informants.

HB 650 is also known as the Castle Doctrine and it took effect December 1, 2011. You may have seen this on the news. This provides for better protection for a homeowner who shoots an intruder. It also amends various other guns laws

HB 427 is also known as "Run and You're Done". As of December 1, 2011, if your client is involved in a felony and is speeding to elude arrest, his or her car will be seized and sold. There are exceptions for cars seized which did not belong to the driver.

New laws which may be of importance to real estate firms took effect October 1, 2011 and January 1, 2012. The most notable change was the new recording fees:

Documents other than Deeds of Trust and mortgages (like a power of attorney) - \$26 for the first 15 pages and \$4 for each page thereafter;

Deeds of Trust and mortgages - \$56 for the first 15 pages and \$4 for each page thereafter.

In exchange for charging more, the legislature is going to allow you more margin space and a smaller font. The margins will change from a 1/2 inch to a 1/4 inch and the minimum font will now be 9 instead of 10. The UNC School of Government published an article which summarizes the changes and it can be found here:

<http://sogpubs.unc.edu/electronicversions/pdfs/lrb35.pdf> .

As you probably are already aware, court costs increased substantially last Fall. Current court costs can be found on AOC's website:

<http://www.nccourts.org/Courts/Trial/Costs/Default.asp>.

The full text of all changes July 1, 2011 through January 1, 2012 can also be found on the NC General Assembly's website:

<http://www.ncleg.net/documentsites/legislativepublications/2011%20Effective%20Dates/2011EffectiveDates.pdf>

Also, if you are a tech geek like me, you'll be excited to hear that the NC General Assembly has an app that allows you to access information from the NCGA's website on your mobile device. Only the Android app is available right now but the iPhone/iPad app is coming. I am even more excited because, as a Droid user, I usually have to watch the i-app come out first and then wait for the Droid version:

[https://market.android.com/details?id=net.ncleg.ncga&feature=search\\_result#?t=W251bGwsMSwyLDEsIm5ldC5uY2xlZy5uY2dhIl0](https://market.android.com/details?id=net.ncleg.ncga&feature=search_result#?t=W251bGwsMSwyLDEsIm5ldC5uY2xlZy5uY2dhIl0)

## Calling All Members!

"People who ask our advice almost never take it. Yet we should never refuse to give it, upon request, for it often helps us to see our own way more clearly." --Brendan Francis

Please consider contributing to the next edition of the *NCPA Forum*. Not only do we want our association's publication to be informative and innovative for each and every member, we also want it to include helpful hints and sound advice from our main resources, our members. We are looking for all types of articles that relate to the paralegal community. Anything of interest to you will most likely be of interest to other paralegals across the state. Let your voice be heard in the *NCPA Forum*. Please submit all articles in Word format to [mel\\_clayton79@yahoo.com](mailto:mel_clayton79@yahoo.com). You may also e-mail your comments, suggestions and possible article contributors to us as well.

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# “How to Make Yourself INDISPENSABLE to your Attorney”

By: John C. Cox, Esq. (Guest Blogger)

*This article was reprinted with permission for The Paralegal Society, a forum created to educate, motivate and inspire paralegals to engage in the pursuit of excellence for all paralegals. Be sure to check it out at [www.theparalegalsociety.wordpress.com](http://www.theparalegalsociety.wordpress.com)!*

As an attorney and a friend to The Paralegal Society, I felt it was important to share with others what, in my opinion, makes a great paralegal. In my practice, I have been associated with some of the best paralegals in the industry, and also some paralegals I would not even wish upon my most despised opposing counsel. In the hopes of inspiring you all to greatness in your profession, I have put together a top 5 list of the best attributes top attorneys look for in their paralegals:

**1. Be Trustworthy.** As an attorney, I seek to develop a paralegal as not just an assistant, but rather an extension of me, because I can't be everywhere. If I can't trust a person, there is no way I can make that person an extension of myself.

**2. Develop ESP.** Ok, so I know this one is not fair, but I need a person that is always thinking about the next step ahead. A great paralegal does not just wait for assignments to be handed to them; they have already thought ahead for the next step, completed that task, and already has it all prepared and ready for my signature (kind of like a real-world “Easy Button”)

**3. Establishing a Macro-managed Relationship.** Attorneys, by nature, are not very good managers of people. We are taught to be very detailed oriented, so we often find ourselves micro-managing everything in our lives. This includes management of staff. For the most effective attorney-paralegal working relationship, we need to be broken of our micro-management tendencies. It starts by paying attention to the little things – margins, spelling, grammar, etc. But, at the

proper time and in the right context, it may also require a conversation initiated by the paralegal assuring the attorney that the paralegal can handle the small stuff, so I, the all-important attorney, can handle all the big picture matters involved in a case file. That conversation is not easy, but one that can develop and maintain a strong working relationship.

**4. Serving as a Barrier For Chatty Clients.** Nearly every attorney is going to have those 1 or 2 clients at any given time that just love to talk to their attorney. Not necessarily about legal matters, but everything else – the weather, their kid's little league batting average, global warming, you name it. This isn't really billable time, and for every minute I'm on the phone with a client talking about non-legal matters, in my mind I am thinking that is another extra minute past 5:00PM I'm going to have to work that day. Serve as a barrier for those chatty clients, and your attorney will work less hours and everyone will be happier as a result.

**5. Commit Yourself to “Problem Files”.** At any given time, you could probably ask your attorney, “If there are 3 files you wish could disappear, what 3 files would they be?”, and your attorney would be able to give you an answer before you finished the sentence. When we stress outside of work, more often than not, it is about 1 or more of these files. By purposely injecting yourselves into these files, not only do you keep files moving (which often does not happen with these problem files), you become an indispensable paralegal. And come 'on, being indispensable to your attorney is the best job security you can have, right?

*John Cox is a partner at the law firm of Bleecker Brodey & Andrews, a law firm dedicated to creditor's rights in the states of Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky. Within the law firm, John specializes in the areas of client relations and technology development.*



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**STEPHANIE B.  
ELLIOTT, ACP, NCCP**

**CANDIDATE FOR  
PRESIDENT**

I am a senior litigation paralegal for the law firm of Gray, Layton, Kersh, Solomon, Furr & Smith, P.A., in Gastonia, Nc where I manage the practice of the senior litigation partner, William E. Moore, Jr. I specialize in litigation, and my experience also encompasses corporate and complex business litigation, employment litigation, personal injury, insurance defense, and trust and estate matters. I have experience with filing in the North Carolina complex Business Court; State Court filings in counties across North Carolina; Federal Filings in the Western, Eastern and Middle districts of North Carolina, the North Carolina Court of Appeals and the Federal Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals (Richmond, VA). I am also a faculty member of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte's Continuing Education Paralegal Certification Program, where I teach Paralegal Profession and Legal Technology, and I am also a member of the Academic Advisory Board. I am a member of various paralegal associations, including National Association of Legal Assistants, North Carolina Paralegal Association, and the North Carolina State Bar Association, Paralegal Section. I am also a featured speaker for the Institute for paralegal Education and the National Business Institute, where I lecture on various litigation topics live and by webinar format. I received a B.S. in Political Science from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in 1998 and I am a Paralegal Technology Post-Baccalaureate Diploma Graduate from Central Piedmont Community College. I obtained my North Carolina State Bar Certification in 2005. I was awarded the Gaston County Paralegal of the Year in 2007, and was nominated for the North Carolina Bar Association Paralegal of the Year Award in 2010, and most recently received the ParalegalGateway.com Paralegal Superstar Award for 2010.

As a member of NCPA, I have served as the Articles Editor for the Forum, and most recently I served as First Vice President (Education) and have planned the Mid year and Annual Seminars. I have served as President since March 2011, and wish to serve another term as NCPA President.



**MELISSA STOCKLEY  
JONES, ACP, NCCP**

**CANDIDATE FOR  
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT**

My name is Melissa Stockley Jones, ACP, NCCP and I am a candidate for First Vice President of the North Carolina Paralegal Association, Inc. I have been employed as a paralegal with the law firm of Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell and Jernigan, L.L.P., in Raleigh since 2000. I work primarily in Medical Malpractice Defense. I have been a member of NCPA since 1996 and have had the opportunity to be involved with NCPA by serving as CLA Review Course Chair, Past First Vice President, Registration Chair and current First Vice President. My involvement with NCPA has offered invaluable experiences to me, and I hope to gain even more experience by serving again as your First Vice President.

I graduated from Appalachian State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice in December 1992. I am also a graduate of the Meredith College Paralegal Program. I earned my designation of Certified Paralegal (CP) from the National Association of Legal Assistants in April 1998 and earned my designation of Advanced Certified Paralegal (ACP) in Discovery from the National Association of Legal Assistants in May 2010. I received my designation of North Carolina Certified Paralegal (NCCP) from the North Carolina State Bar in December 2005. In addition to being a member of NCPA, I am also a member of the National Association of Legal Assistants and the Paralegal Division of the North Carolina Bar Association.

I would like to continue my involvement with NCPA by serving again as your First Vice President in the upcoming year. I am aware of the importance of education and the role that NCPA plays in ensuring its members are aware of new developments in our profession. If elected to the office of First Vice President, I will utilize the experience I have gained while serving in the past as First Vice President, CLA Review Course Chair and Registration Chair to help develop worthwhile educational programs for NCPA.





**BEVERLY KING  
MOORE, NCCP**

**CANDIDATE FOR  
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT**

Mrs. Moore currently is a paralegal for Tissue Law Offices, PLLC, in Charlotte, NC dealing with commercial real estate, and business organizations. She has been working Mr. Tissue for nine years as of March 2011. She received her Paralegal Certificate from King's College in December 1995 and her NCCP designation in December 2005.

Mrs. Moore currently serves NCPA as Second Vice President (Membership). Other positions she has held in NCPA are: Chairman of the Board, Student/School Relations Chair, District IX Director and Parliamentarian. Aside from her membership and position in NCPA, she has been an active member of the Metrolina Paralegal Association (MPA) where she has held such offices as Third Vice-President, NALA Liaison, Patron Membership Chair and Social Committee Chair. She is also a member of the Catawba Valley Paralegal Association (CVPA) where she has served as the Law Update Committee Chair. In February 2012, she is serving as Site Coordinator for the *Wade Edwards High School Mock Trial* regional competition in Charlotte.



**KAYE H. SUMMERS,  
ACP, NCCP**

**CANDIDATE FOR  
NALA LIAISON**

I am honored to be considered for the position of NALA Liaison for a second term. I have thoroughly enjoyed serving as your liaison and representing NCPA.

I am a paralegal with the law firm of Pulley, Watson, King & Lischer, P.A. in Durham, North Carolina, where I work primarily in the areas of commercial litigation, business organization and general business matters. I earned my CLA designation from the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) in 2001, my North Carolina Certified Paralegal ("NCCP") designation in 2005, and my ACP designation from NALA in 2010. Ms. Summers was appointed to serve as a member of the Paralegal Certification Committee by the North Carolina State Bar Board of Paralegal Certification on March 1, 2011.

I was shocked and humbled to be awarded the 2011 Affiliates Award, an award given by NALA based on submissions from the affiliate associations. Again, I wish to thank all of you as members of NCPA for believing in me, and supporting me throughout my many years serving as a member of the NCPA Board



**STEPHANIE L. IVANS,  
NCCP**

**CANDIDATE FOR  
DIRECTOR OF DISTRICT VII**

Stephanie Leigh Ivans is a native of Western North Carolina. She graduated from Southwestern Community College in Sylva, NC with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Paralegal Technology and became a North Carolina Certified Paralegal in 2006. Stephanie began her Paralegal career working for Criminal Defense Attorney Frank Lay in 2003 and is still there today. Currently, she resides in Lake Junaluska, NC (Haywood County). Stephanie truly enjoys being a paralegal and hopes to continue in this career path for many years to come. She looks forward to having the opportunity to continue to serve NCPA!

## NCPA Wishes the Following Members a Very Happy Birthday!

*If your birthday is not listed correctly, please edit your profile on our website ([www.ncparalegal.org](http://www.ncparalegal.org)) to make sure we have the correct month!*

### March

Christine Bolyard Alexander  
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# NCPA TIME MACHINE

In this edition of the Time Machine we're going to go back a few Springs and see what was up in the world of NCPA. As we are preparing for another Annual Seminar, this Time Machine is going to focus on Seminar-related events. First, an article from Spring 2006 - Ethics Chairperson Blanche S. Berkowitz's piece on how CPEs are a vital part of your career as a Paralegal. The knowledge we gain at Annual and other CPEs is vital not only to us, but to the attorneys that rely on us every day. Next, our Time Machine photograph takes us back to the 1998 Annual Seminar at the Raleigh Marriott Crabtree Valley for a look at NCPA's Board of Directors. We hope you enjoy the Time Machine, and if you have any memories from issues back you would like us to revisit, contact me anytime at [brandonlruth@gmail.com](mailto:brandonlruth@gmail.com).

## Ethics Corner

### *Continuing Paralegal Education – A Vital Part of Any Paralegal's Career*

**Blanche S. Berkowitz, Ethics Chairperson**



The NCPA's definition of a paralegal can be found in Article IV, Section 1 of its Bylaws, which also follows the NALA Code of Ethics definition. Within that definition are the requirements that paralegals "have knowledge and expertise regarding the legal system and substantive and procedural law" and "a sufficient knowledge of legal concepts." This knowledge may be obtained "through formal education, training, and experience." Canon 6 of the NALA Code of Ethics states that a "legal assistant must strive to maintain integrity and a high degree of competency through education and training with respect to professional responsibility, local rules and practice, and through continuing education in substantive areas of law to better assist the legal profession in fulfilling its duty to provide legal service."

In addition to NCPA and NALA professional guidelines, paralegals now have the North Carolina Plan for Certification of Paralegals under Subchapter G of the North Carolina State Bar's Rules and Regulations, which establishes minimum educational requirements to become certified and to maintain such certification. Paralegals who have achieved such certification should become familiar with those requirements as set forth under Rule .0120 and Rules .0201-.0205.

Building competency in the professional arena through attending continuing legal educational seminars is crucial to a paralegal's ca-

reer. Paralegals should consider attending a wide variety of classes, even in areas in which they do not practice, in order to broaden their knowledge. Paralegals need to understand legal terminology and have good research and investigative skills. Familiarity with the operation and applications of computers in legal research and litigation support is also important. Paralegals should stay informed of new developments in the laws that affect their area of practice. Attorneys have become reliant on their paralegal's cutting edge knowledge and expertise in the technicalities of the law. Participation in continuing legal education seminars allows paralegals to maintain and expand their knowledge of the most current statutes and changes in the law. As paralegals are given more responsibilities, they gain invaluable work experience and the cycle of professionalism perpetuates.

Spring 2006



## NCPA TIME MACHINE continued



Spring 1998

*1998 Annual Seminar  
at the Raleigh Marriott  
Crabtree Valley*

NCPA Board of Directors 1998 - from left to right: First Row - Sharon L. Wall, CLA, Director At Large, Janice S. Dale, CLA, District IX Director, Angela Bardill-Maynard, CLA, District III Director, Kathryn G. Tate, J.D., Paralegal Educator Liaison. Back Row - Amy H. Parson, CLA, District II Director, Linda Lee Marion, CLA, Chairman, District IV Director, Georgie Hartman, CLA, District VII Director, Amy J. Hill, CLAS, Bar Liaison, Jennifer E. Michaels-Dortch, District V Director, Sharon robertson, CLAS, President, Virginia M. Burrows, CLAS, NALA Liaison.

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