

# THE PARAVIEW

Quarterly Publication of the  
Metrolina Paralegal Association



# 2011

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FOURTH QUARTER  
EDITION



**THE PARAVIEW**  
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**ADVERTISING RATES**

The Metrolina Paralegal Association publishes *The Paraview*, which includes substantive legal articles of interest and general news for the career paralegal. This publication is distributed to approximately 250 members of the MPA in the Charlotte area. The membership of the MPA includes paralegals from private law firms, corporations, title companies, government agencies, local community colleges, educators, and paralegal students. Advertising is available in *The Paraview*, which is the only local professional publication of this type in the Metrolina area. Our magazine will keep your display advertisement circulating in the legal community for a three-month period.

**Our display ad rates per issue are as follows:**

1/8 page size (business card)	\$35.00
1/4 page size	\$60.00
1/2 page size	\$110.00
Full page size	\$150.00
Back cover inside	\$175.00

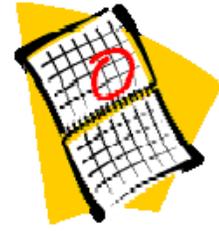
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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS 4TH Quarter 2011



### October 2011

- October 5-MPA Executive Board Meeting
- October 10-Columbus Day
- October 13-MPA Monthly Meeting
- October 24-United Nations Day
- October 31-Halloween



### November 2011

- November 2-MPA Executive Board Meeting
- November 6-Daylight Savings time ends
- November 10-MPA Monthly Meeting
- November 11-Veterans Day
- November 24-Thanksgiving



### December 2011

- December 7-Pearl Harbor Day
- December 8-MPA Holiday Party
- December 21-Hanukkah begins/Winter begins
- December 25-Christmas
- December 26-Kwanzaa begins

# STAY ON TRACK WITH THESE HELPFUL TOOLS



## GOOGLE MAPS

Google Maps can be a useful tool in litigation cases. It can help you create a diagram and/or a photograph of a location. You can also use Google Street view to help you obtain a clear understanding of the location of streets and buildings on those streets.

## GOOGLE EARTH

Google Earth contains a database of aerial photos and satellite photos of the entire Earth. It also includes archival photos, some dating as far back as the 1940s, which can be helpful in determining the condition of property over many years.

“





# MPA Fall Fest 2011

This year's MPA Fall Fest occurred on Friday, September 9, 2011 at The Omni Hotel in Uptown Charlotte. This was a new venue for MPA this year. Also, MPA provided Wi-Fi access this year which was a new feature.

The Fall Fest began with registration and breakfast as well as opening remarks. Exhibitors' booths were on display outside the meeting room so attendees had a chance to mingle with sponsors and learn about their services.

Larry Jones, an attorney with Alston & Bird LLP, provided a very interesting discussion on intellectual property and infringements in the retail world. Mr. Jones, with the assistance of "Vanna" (one of our paralegal colleagues) displayed several knockoffs and similar designs that stumped the audience in trying to determine whether or not that these similar designs were infringements.

Scott Broyles, a professor with the Charlotte School of Law, who was formerly with the US Attorney's Office for the United States District Court for the Western District of North Carolina, provided a timely discussion on the war on terror. He relayed his involvement in a case that related to the transport of cigarettes between Charlotte and Detroit. The parties involved had ties to terrorist groups in the Middle East.

Grainger Pierce, an attorney with Nexsen Pruet, focused on employment law issues. He discussed the benefits and pitfalls of using social media to conduct investigations.

Jim Blackburn, a former attorney, was the ethics speaker this year. Mr. Blackburn relayed his experience including the loss of his law license and how he turned his life around following that loss.

Attendees enjoyed a buffet lunch. Several sponsors and MPA provided door prizes to those in attendance.

Rick Hinson, a private investigator with Hinson Investigations, provided an enlightening session on techniques to detect deceptive behavior. Mr. Hinson utilized video footage to showcase behaviors that are deceptive. Who can forget the gentleman in the string bikini?

Kary Watson, a family law attorney, at Horack, Talley Pharr & Lowndes, P.A., provided insight on discovery issues in family law involving social media. Ms. Watson emphasized the importance of watching what you do and say in the social media realm.

The seminar concluded with a happy hour event co-sponsored by Huseby, Inc. and NOVA Office Strategies, Inc.



Our sincere thanks to the following  
for participating in the 2011 Fall Fest CLE Seminar  
Your continuing support is greatly appreciated!

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## WHAT ARE THE SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES OF A PARALEGAL?

by Lynne J. DeVenny

My friend and fellow North Carolinian, Wendy Kimbel, ACP, NCCP, was cleaning out some files recently, when she came across her response to a paralegal student's question, "What are the skills and attributes of a paralegal?"

Wendy shared her very thorough and articulate response with me, and I loved her answer so much that I asked her for permission to share it with Practical Paralegalism's readers.

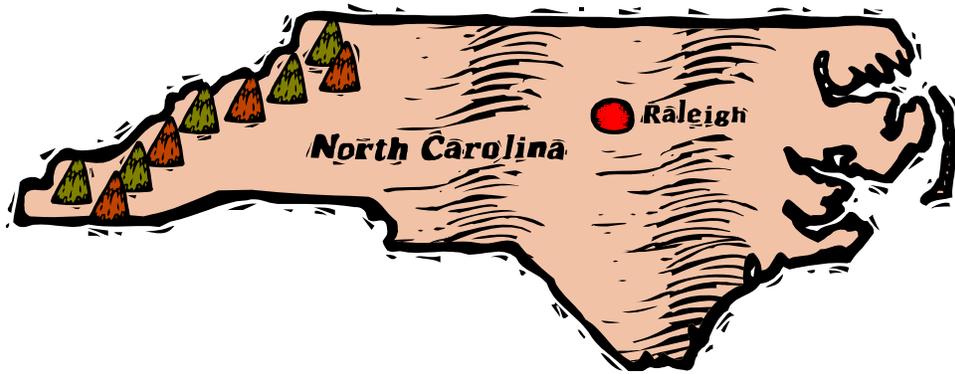
The Skills and Attributes of a Paralegal:

- Listens, watches and perceives what is meant, as well as what is said.
- Has an inquiring mind—i.e., is a natural born snoop and eavesdropper and can read upside down.
- Gathers information and stores it away like a magpie because it's likely to come in handy at some point in the future.
- Develops an intuitive sense of the law and is prepared to accept its contradictions.
- Can diagram a whole paragraph as if it were a single sentence (which it may be) and can demonstrate the relationship and effect of the various clauses on one another.
- Can converse in speech and in writing with anybody about anything, and cultivates a wide variety of connections.
- Knows that "verbal" means words and can apply to written or oral communication.
- Appreciates the significance of "verbal" and "non-verbal" because non-verbal actions can be significant as well—such as a handshake indicating a meeting of the minds in the matter of an oral contract.
- Accepts that it's better to appear stupid than to risk giving unlicensed legal advice.
- Also understands that accurately communicating information between an attorney and a client does not constitute giving legal advice.
- Understands that the words organize, organized, and organizing have less to do with a tidy desk than they do with ways of thinking and is able to operate within a variety of organizational systems.
- Knows that the most important part of getting an answer is the proper framing of the question and continuously works to develop that skill.
- Operates within a personal frame of legal ethics, being prepared to be persuaded of the propriety of a course of dealing, and being equally prepared to act, or refuse to act, in the face of impropriety.
- Knows that careful adherence to all rights, protections and procedures under the law is vital for the protection of the individual rights of all citizens.

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Wendy Kimbel is a North Carolina State Bar Certified Paralegal and National Association of Legal Assistants Advanced Certified Paralegal, holding specialty designations in areas of Real Estate and Corporate & Business Law. She graduated from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and since 1978 has assisted attorneys in private practice in transactions dealing in money and property.

\*\*Reprinted with permission of Lynne J. DeVenny, Author/Blogger at Practical Paralegalism (<http://www.practicalparalegalism.com>)\*\*

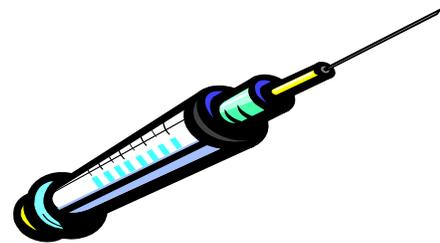


# NORTH CAROLINA NEWS



## NORTH CAROLINA STATE FAIR

The North Carolina State Fair will be held on the N.C. State Fairgrounds October 13 through October 23, 2011 in Raleigh. Some of the scheduled performances include Kellie Pickler, Dionne Warwick, Newsboys, and George Jones. For more information, go to [www.ncstatefair.org](http://www.ncstatefair.org).



## DON'T FORGET YOUR FLU SHOT

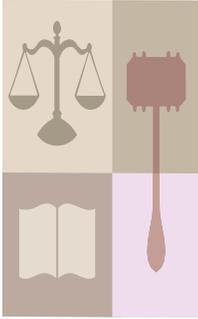
The State Health Director, Dr. Jeff Engel, urges all North Carolinians to protect themselves and their families by getting a flu shot. There were 36 people who died from flu-related illness in North Carolina last year. For more information on where to go to get your shot, go to [www.flu.nc.gov](http://www.flu.nc.gov).



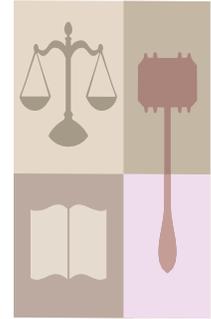
## N.C. 12 ON HATTERAS ISLAND REOPENED

The North Carolina Department of Transportation reopened N.C. 12 on Monday, October 10, 2011. The reopening occurred seven weeks after Hurricane Irene damaged the highway between Oregon Inlet and Rodanthe. The highway serves as a major throughfare to the Outer Banks.





# A DAY IN THE LIFE... OF AN COURT ADMINISTRATION PARALEGAL



*Maura Chavez, NCCP is a Community Support Coordinator for the Trial Court Administrator's Office for the 26th Judicial District (Mecklenburg County)*

## Atypical Days and Tasks

First of all let me begin by saying that my job duties do not involve the typical paralegal items that one imagines. My official job title is Community Support Coordinator for the Trial Court Administrator's office. I am under the direct supervision of the Community Outreach and Access Administrator. Typically my day starts at 8-8:30 am and ends anywhere between 5:30-7 pm. The times are not necessarily set in stone since as part of my job, I do a lot of after hours and weekend "projects".

Although I occasionally assist the Trial Court Administrator on a few projects, in reality, I wear many hats. The main duties include being the ADA (American with Disability Act) coordinator for the courthouse, overseeing the multi culture outreach projects that we have both here in the courthouse and in the community, assisting with courthouse tours for school children and providing logistical information to the many judicial interns. My typical day depends on what hat I am wearing.

Unlike many paralegals where their focus is on one specific area, I am constantly moving from criminal to civil to administration to community. My paralegal training has enabled me to be so diverse in my everyday tasks. Being the ADA coordinator, I am able to coordinate specific needs of consumers depending on their request and the availability that we have here within the building. I am constantly engaging with both the general community and legal community. I am the one person that has the ability to work in the many realms of the courthouse. Whenever needed, I am also the person that provides the judicial bench with guidance in certain regulations and culture differences that exist in Charlotte. I never have a dull moment nor have a typical day.

## Pros of Paralegal Training

Being a paralegal has given the needed training and focus that I need to be able to juggle so many hats. Although being a paralegal is not a "necessity" for my current position, I have felt that without the concepts I've learned in my paralegal studies, I would not have the needed skills to stay focused.

## Rewards

The most rewarding aspect of my job is being so versatile and getting that sense of assisting those who need help.

## Specialty

My underlining passion is immigration. I have been exposed with the many issues that the non-English speaking communities have had to deal with on a daily basis. The federal immigration regulations are so complex and lengthy that I would love to be able to work with an Immigration attorney just to get a sense of their mind set and motivation.



## ARE YOU A ONE MAN BAND? BY VICKI VOISIN

Do you have too much to do and not enough time to get it all done? Do you run out of day before you run out of list? Do you try to do everything yourself?

If you answered 'Yes!' to any of those questions, you are operating like a One Man Band. There is a solution: delegate!

It may be difficult to give up control of some of your responsibilities but that's the only way you'll get off the merry-go-round and stop being a 'one man band.'

Get over the idea that you, and only you, are capable of handling a job....that it will just not be good enough unless you do it yourself. While there may be critical issues that require your personal attention, remember that everything isn't critical.

If you delegate, you'll take a giant step toward relieving the stress and overwhelm of having too much to do.

B. Eugene Greissman, author of 'Time Tactics of Very Successful People,' said: You should do only that which only you can do.' It's true: decide what you have to do that takes your unique talents and expertise and then allow someone else to do the rest!

When you delegate, there are several steps you need to take to be effective:

1. Plan. Review the work you have to do and map out the steps that need to be taken to finish the project. From that map, determine which steps 'only you can do' and which steps can be done by someone else.

You'll find it easier to delegate if you use the 80% rule: you think that no one can do the job as well as you, so delegate when the job can be done to 80% of your satisfaction. Now, 80% of your satisfaction may not be perfect but remember that you now have two goals: 1) getting the job done and 2) taking some pressure off yourself. While you're mapping out your plan, be sure to eliminate anything that doesn't have to be done at all. Don't waste your time...or someone else's...doing jobs that aren't necessary.

2. Decide to whom you're delegating. Select the person who's ready to do the job...or someone you're willing to train so that they can ultimately do the job. You shouldn't delegate to people just because they're standing next to you. Consider their abilities, experience and eagerness. It's one thing if you impose your high standards on yourself, but you shouldn't impose them on someone who can't live up to your expectations. We all have different degrees of talents and skills. You can't expect yourself or others to operate beyond the current level of ability.

## ARE YOU A ONE MAN BAND? BY VICKI VOISIN-CONT.

3. Give clear directions. Communication is the key here. If you don't give clear directions, you'll be setting the other person up for failure. The person you are delegating to must understand exactly what you want to get the results you're looking for. People can't read your mind. If you want a document or a file set up a certain way, let them know. This clear direction should also include deadlines for completing the work. If the work can't be completed by your deadline, that needs to be resolved up front.

4. Follow Up. Make notes in your planner (either electronic or paper) to remind you when the job should be completed and to schedule 'appointments' to check on the progress of the work. This will keep everyone on task and avoid any surprises when the deadline arrives and the work isn't completed.

5. Reward success. Praise is often the most effective reward. Some occasions even call for a thank-you note for a job well done or perhaps a special treat. If there is an unsuccessful, or just partly successful, result, use a positive approach to review the errors and make your expectations clear so that future results will be satisfactory. This is important if you expect this person to do work for you again. Always remember: praise in public and correct in private.

Your challenge: Resolve to stop thinking that you're the only one who can do a job that meets your standards. This may mean you have to reconsider your standards. Then look at all the work on your desk and determine what can be done by someone else. Remember that you should be working on things that only you can do. If the work can be done satisfactorily by someone else, you should delegate it.

Follow the five steps to successful delegating and you'll be on your way to reducing your workload and relieving much of the stress in your life. You'll no longer be a one man band...you'll be the leader of the orchestra!

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 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)



# NALA 2011 CONVENTION RECAP



## *BIG HAIR CONTEST*

NALA's 36th Annual Meeting and Education Institute was held in Plano, Texas this July, and over 300 of the best and brightest paralegals from all over the country gathered to share ideas, receive top-notch continuing legal education, and do the business of a national professional association. The conference began with a fun-filled Early Bird Reception on Tuesday night, where prizes were awarded for those who had the "biggest hair-dos"—Texas-style, and finished with an elegant reception on Friday evening when NALA's newly-elected officers were installed.

Currently NALA has over 6,000 members, and more than 18,000 paralegals are represented through membership in NALA-affiliated associations like the MPA. The professionalism projected by NALA and its people was evident throughout the conference. Along with NALA Liaison Susan Randolph, MPA President Candace Russell attended this year's conference and was part of NALA's LEAP Program ( LEAP stands for Leadership Enhancement and Preparation). Candace also was a candidate for the office of Region II Director for NALA (which includes North Carolina).

Certification by NALA, instituted back in 1976, has become the national professional credential for paralegals. It ensures a national uniformity of professional standards and permits paralegals to move from one state to another without loss of their certified status. More than 15,000 paralegals have earned their national certification through NALA, with approximately 2,000 having gone on to achieve the demanding Advanced Certified Paralegal designation.

The certifying exam involves successful completion of five exam sections covering verbal and written communication skills, judgment and analytical abilities, ethics, human relations, legal terminology, and legal research, plus five tests covering the American legal system and four other areas of substantive law. The Certified Paralegal Exam is administered three times a year in various places around the country. Once all sections of the exam are successfully completed, the CLA/CP certification is bestowed, and then 50 hours of continuing legal education is required every five years.

NALA is a great help to its members through its many educational resources. It produces self-paced, on-line studies and Webinars, holds excellent educational sessions at its annual meetings, and presents the "Short Course" each year as a review for the certification exam.

This past year, the full-time NALA staff in Tulsa, Oklahoma, was very busy. They traveled across the country to visit as many affiliate associations as possible, including a breakfast meeting earlier this year with the MPA executive committee. They successfully transitioned from old-school paper-and-pencil exams to computer-based testing. They increased enrollment in all NALA programs. They compiled and released their 2010 "National Paralegal Utilization and Compensation Survey." And they began a FaceBook presence. Certified paralegals can now use the NALA website to review their record of CLE credits, and another benefit to NALA members, new this year, is an \$80 gift certificate for use with any of NALA's educational programs.

# MPA Board Members and Chairpersons 2011-2012

If you have any questions or comments concerning the MPA or its activities, please feel free to contact any one of the following MPA Board Members.

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