

VOLUME No. 2009
ISSUE NO. 2
FEBRUARY 2009

PROFESSIONAL BULLETIN
FOR THE
BELL COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
PARALEGALS



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope you have plans to attend the 2nd Annual Full-day Seminar sponsored by the Bell County Bar Association Paralegals. I know it is sometimes hard to get a day away from the office because your attorneys rely on you so much. Invite them to attend, as well. Things are coming together nicely with the seminar. It looks to be even better than last year's. Don't forget that we won't be having a meeting on February 19th due to the seminar. We will, however, be meeting in March, as usual.

STATISTICS:

- Membership - 74 Members
- Treasurer Report \$3008.68

FEATURED ARTICLE:

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MY LIFE AS A PARALEGAL

By: Debbie Sims

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THE LADDER OF LOVE

An amazing love story in honor of Valentine's Day.

The website is almost complete! We should be unveiling it to the whole world very soon. If you'd like to check it out, the address is www.bcbaparalegals.org. Please look at it and send your suggestions and comments to any of the contact links on the site. The committee tried to think of everything that might be needed on our website. If we missed anything, we would love to hear from you.

We will be facing the election of new officers again in April. Please be thinking about whether or not you would like to serve in any capacity. Additionally, think about who you would like to nominate for a position. If you have someone in mind, be sure you ask them if they would consider the position. If they are not willing to serve, please do not nominate them.

Has anyone sent anything to their Secret Pal lately? Let's not forget to do things for those who chose to be a part of this extracurricular activity. I am a little guilty of that myself, but will make a conscious effort to remedy that situation this week.

That is it from me this month! I look forward to seeing you all on February 20th at the Hilton Garden Inn.

Brenda

BOARD MEETINGS will be held at Fuddrucker's in Killeen from noon to 1:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

NEXT BOARD MEETING:

FEBRUARY 12, 2009

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS are held in Judge Mischian's courtroom from noon to 1:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:

MARCH 19, 2009

BCBA PARALEGALS

'08-'09 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT – Brenda Colvin

VICE PRESIDENT – Sherry Gonzalez

SECRETARY – Cindi Evetts

TREASURER – Rene Murray

PARLIAMENTARIAN – Susie Ivy

COMMITTEE LIAISON – Billie Sue Scales

HISTORIAN – Pat Simecek

bcbalad@yahoo.com

MY LIFE AS A PARALEGAL

BY: DEBBIE SIMS

I have been working in a law office since 1973, now I'm not THAT OLD, I started during my sophomore year in high school, before I was even old enough to get a drivers license. During my 1st year typing class the Vocational Office Education teacher came in and asked if I wanted a job. Now we were using manual typewriters in that class, and I didn't think I was doing all that great with my typing. But, evidently my teachers had faith in me when I didn't. In those days, a VOE student could, grades permitting, go to school until lunch and then have a job for the afternoon during your junior and senior years. So, I went straight into the VOE class and got to type on electric typewriters. WOW!

I went to work for Leonard Allen who practiced mostly real estate, family law and probate (he even did income tax returns for select clients). He had one full time lady in the office when I was hired. He had been elected Justice of the Peace in 1956 (the year before I was born) and continued to hold the position until his death in 1985. I loved the job and was eager to learn the how and why to everything. Mr. Allen was very patient and willing to explain things to me as they came up. During my senior year we upgraded our typewriter to an IBM Correcting Selectric (of course a lot of you have no idea what I'm talking about), but at that time, it was fantastic! Of course, we used carbon paper. Luckily, he was very selective about making changes in documents because the whole thing had to be re-typed.

I graduated fifth in my class at Rockdale High in 1975 and continued to work for Mr. Allen until his death in 1985 (12 years).

After Mr. Allen's death, Robert Jack, an attorney in Cameron, took over our office and I worked for him until 1990. His practice was mostly real estate, some oil and gas title opinions, family law and probate. We had computers then, a Lanier system where you put everything on a disc. It had a smart disc, when you ran out of memory you had to insert this disc to get the memory built back up. I typed faster than the system could work, so it beeped at me quite often to stop and let it catch up.

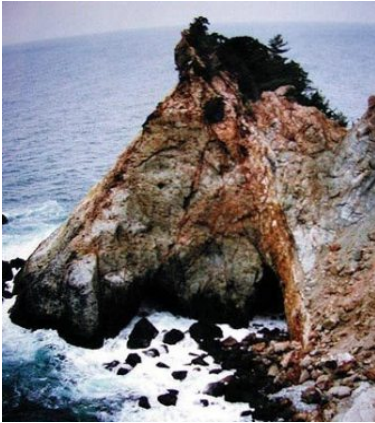
I then went to work for Richard A. Dodd, who is a personal injury attorney in Cameron. In April, I will have worked for him 19 years. The firm is now known as, Cappolino, Dodd & Krebs, LLP, and we have five attorneys: Richard Dodd, Tim Cappolino, Craig Brown, Valerie Farwell and Ryan Krebs. Our firm is actively involved in asbestos litigation including representation of mesothelioma and cancer victims who were exposed to asbestos, and plaintiffs in other types of personal injury cases, including car wrecks, medical negligence, and product liability.

Of course we all know things have really changed in the law office. When I first started working in 1973, most all real estate documents were forms to fill in the blanks and it didn't take a ream of paper to close a transaction. Most divorces were simple, they consisted of a Petition, Waiver and Decree, few restraining orders were issued and very seldom was any discovery paperwork done. There was very little call, at least in Rockdale, for a Will to be over three pages long.

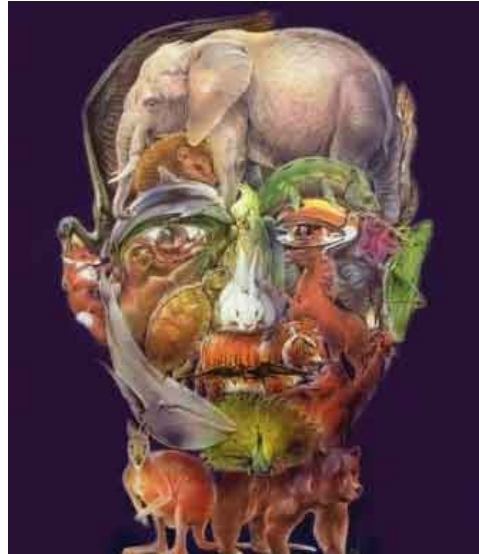
Now everything is more specialized. We cannot function without our computers, scanners, copiers, cell phones, e-mail and internet. Heaven help the repair man if something malfunctions and he can't get to the office until the next day to fix it. No one knows what carbon paper is (thank goodness) and we don't even have to spell very well, our computers will correct us automatically.

I've always enjoyed working in the law office (although some days you wouldn't know it, but then we all have those kind of days). It is a good feeling to be part of a team of professionals who help those who can't navigate the legal system on their own. I can't imagine doing anything else so I guess I'll be here until my retirement or until I can't see the largest font on the computer monitor.

THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS AS THEY SEEM!!!



This is a natural mountain which has a shape of a horse face, by just seeing the photograph most people think it is a horse face photograph but after careful study of the picture and the surroundings one can determine this optical illusion.



Can you count how many animals can actually be seen in this picture? From elephants to rabbits, to bears, kangaroos, whales, peacocks, and grasshoppers.



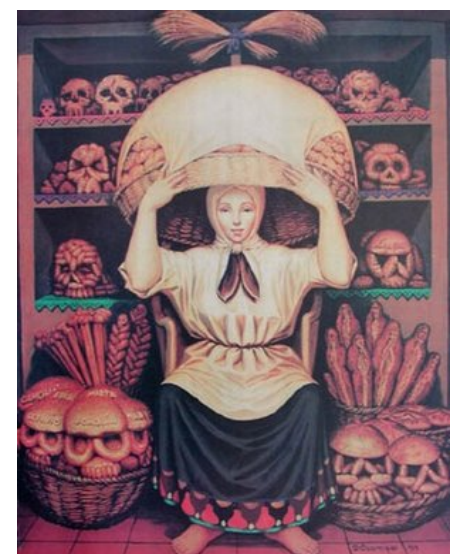
This horse that is poking his head out of the stable looks pretty normal, but if you turn your head to the side, you will see a frog sitting on the edge of a pond.



**HIGH
SOCIETY
OR A
DONKEY?**



Bengal tiger standing in a bamboo forest. Look for the words "The Hidden Tiger" in the image above, where is the hidden tiger? Hint: Read between the lines (or stripes).



What do you see in this picture? There are many people who can only see skulls all over but one can very easily see a lady sitting in the center too.

**2ND ANNUAL
BELL COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
PARALEGALS' SEMINAR**

**FEBRUARY 20, 2009
@ THE HILTON GARDEN INN**

**ATTORNEYS, PARALEGALS AND
PARA-PROFESSIONAL STAFF
ARE INVITED AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND**

**PLEASE CONTACT KATHY TAYLOR
FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

kathytaylor@bcswlaw.com

Phone: 254.774.8333 ext. 214

**PLEASE CONTACT PAT SIMECEK
TO REGISTER:**

patriciasimecek@bcswlaw.com

Phone: 254.774.8333 ext. 201

THE “LADDER OF LOVE”

A weird love story has come out of China recently and managed to touch the world. It is a story of a man and an older woman who ran off to live and love each other in peace for over half century.

Over 50 years ago, Liu, was a 19 years-old boy, fell in love with a 29 year-old widowed mother named Xu. At the time, it was unacceptable and immoral for a young man to love an older woman.

To avoid the market gossips, the couple decided to elope and lived in a cave in Jiangjin County in Southern ChongQing area.



In the beginning, they had nothing, no electricity or even food. They had to eat grass and roots they found in the mountain, and Liu made a kerosene lamp that they used to lighten up their lives.

Starting the second year of living in the mountain, Liu began, and continue for over 50 years, to hand carve the steps so that his wife could get down the mountain easily.

A half century later in 2001, a group of adventurers were exploring the forest, they surprisingly found the elderly couple and the over 6,000 stairs of hand carved ladder.

The couple had lived in peace for over 50 years. Liu, now 72 years-old, returned from his daily farm work and collapsed. Xu sat and prayed with her husband as she passed away in her arms. So in love with Xu, was Liu, that no one was able to release the grip he had on his wife's hand even after he had passed away.



“YOU PROMISED ME YOU’LL TAKE CARE OF ME, YOU’LL ALWAYS BE WITH ME UNTIL THE DAY I DIED, NOW YOU LEFT BEFORE ME, HOW AM I GOING TO LIVE WITHOUT YOU?”...

Xu spent days softly repeating this sentence and touching her husband's black coffin with tears rolling down her cheeks. In 2006, their story became one of the top 10 loves stories from China, collected by the Chinese Women Weekly. The local government has decided to preserve the “love ladder” and the place they lived as a museum, so this love story can liver forever. *Taken from 2008 Weird Asia News*

FLORIDA COURT SETS ATHEIST HOLIDAY

In Florida, an atheist created a case against the upcoming Easter and Passover holy days. He hired an attorney to bring a discrimination case against Christians, Jews and observances of their holy days. The argument was that it was unfair that atheists had no such recognized days. The case was brought before a judge. After listening to the passionate presentation by the lawyer, the judge banged his gavel declaring, "Case dismissed!" The lawyer immediately stood objecting to the ruling saying, "Your honor, how can you possibly dismiss this case? The Christians have Christmas, Easter and others. The Jews have Passover, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah, yet my client and all other atheists have no such holidays." The judge leaned forward in his chair saying, "But you do. Your client, counsel, if woefully ignorant." The lawyer said, "Your Honor, we are unaware of any special observance or holiday for atheists." The judge said, "The calendar says April 1st is April Fools Day. Psalm 14:1 states, 'The fool says in his heart, there is no God.' Thus, it is the opinion of this court, that if your client says there is no God, then he is a fool. Therefore, April 1st is his day. Court is adjourned."

YOU GOTTA LOVE A JUDGE THAT KNOWS HIS SCRIPTURE!

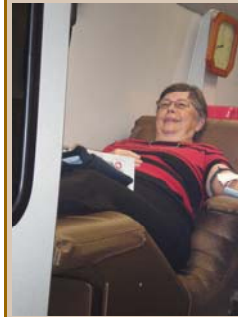
The Law Offices of Ed L. Laughlin, principal office in Temple, has an immediate opening for a Paralegal in Family Law, also willing to be trained in Bankruptcy Law. Must have good organization skills and work well with the public. Knowledge of ProDoc is helpful, but will train. To apply, please send resume to Susan C. Green at:

susan@edlaughlin.com

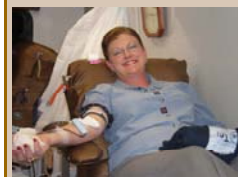
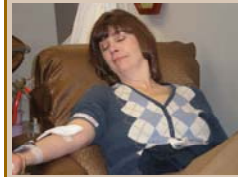
Temporary, full time Legal Assistant/Paralegal needed for well-established Harker Heights/Killeen law firm with diverse areas of practice. Experience in civil litigation is preferred. Applicants should be proficient typists. Experience with an office calendaring system and document management system is a definite plus. Applicants must have the ability to work independently and be able to work as a team player. Good written and oral communication skills are required. Salary is commensurate with experience. For more information, please contact Mary Jane Serna at 254.690.5688.

Cynthia Champion is our job bank coordinator. Firms looking to hire or paralegals looking for work can send an email to:

cjhelman254@yahoo.com



Thank you to our 4 Hometown Heroes. Looks like one even had a good nap. :o)



WHY BECOME A BLOOD DONOR?

Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood.

Nearly 400 units of blood must be available each week to meet the needs of S&W patients in our community.

Approximately 60 percent of the population is eligible to donate blood, but only 5 percent actually do.

Each donation can touch the lives of up to three different patients.

Blood can't be made artificially; it can only be given by healthy people like you.

Your blood donation saves lives.

WHERE DO I DONATE?

Stop by the S&W Blood Center on the 1st floor of the main hospital (Room 115) across from the McLane Dining room or to schedule an appointment online go to www.sw.org or call 1-877-HERO.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday - Thursday 9am - 6pm
Friday 9am - 4pm

PARALEGAL "ADVICE"

- **DO NOT ASSUME**, always verify the facts.
- Pay attention to detail. No one ever lost a case by knowing the facts too well.
- If you don't know the answer, know the resources you can use to find it. Knowing the resources is half the battle.
- Proofread all work. One mistake can compromise your case.
- Respect your attorney and their client by meeting or exceeding deadlines. No one has ever been fired for finishing a project early.
- Networking is invaluable. You can never know too many knowledgeable people.
- Treat legal secretaries with respect. You will find that they actually know more about some things than you do.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

KRISTI PATTERSON - 6TH

CINDY PENNINGTON - 8TH

PAT SIMECEK - 13TH

KRISTA DUKE - 20TH

BILLIE SUE SCALES - 21ST

FEBRUARY

WHAT YOUR BIRTHDAY MONTH SAYS ABOUT YOU

Peaceful and harmonious, you seek the gentle side of life; Your warmth and consideration touches many; Your soul reflects: Purity, Modesty and Faithfulness; Your gemstone: Amethyst; Your flower: Iris; Your colors: Purple, Yellow and Light Blue.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Do you have a great story to tell, have favorite snapshots, get well wishes, birth announcements, wedding announcements or any other information that is important to you that you would like to share with other members? We would like to know about it...and what an excellent way to get to know each other as well. This newsletter is about YOU and all the great work being performed on the job as well as off the clock. So, send me your story (with photo, if possible) and let's get to know one another.

STILL WAITING TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!

Melissa Barton-Wood
melissabartonwood@bcswlaw.com

