



The Paralegal Times

An Official Publication of the Shenandoah Valley Paralegal Association
Member of the Virginia Alliance of Paralegal Associations

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SVPA 2005 Officers

President – Alex M. Wilmer

(540) 434-5353
amw@littensipe.com

President-Elect – Charles R. Chenault

(540) 434-5353
crc@littensipe.com

Secretary – Elizabeth B. Knicely

(540) 434-5353
ebk@littensipe.com

Treasurer – Nancy Hodges

(540) 434-0337
nlhodgesla04@yahoo.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Alex M. Wilmer

It is hard to believe, but Memorial Day is just around the corner. Before we head into summer, don't forget about our Law Day luncheon on Thursday, May 26th at Simple Pleasures. We are very excited to have Commonwealth's Attorney Marsha Garst as our guest speaker for this year's luncheon.

Our most recent membership meeting was held on April 13th as a joint meeting with the Harrisonburg-Rockingham County Bar Association. On behalf of SVPA, I would like to thank the Bar Association and guest speaker, L. Wayne Harper, for their willingness to meet with us and share some thoughts on the new computer system at the Clerk's Office.

I would also like to welcome Doris Pye as one of our newest members. Doris was one of the charter members of SVPA in 1990, and it is great to have her back as a member. As always, if you have any suggestions, comments, or new ideas for improving SVPA, please e-mail me at amw@littensipe.com, or feel free to contact any member of the Executive Committee.

THE COMMUNITY TAX LAW PROJECT

Martha M. Munson

The Community Tax Law Project (CTLP) is a nonprofit organization providing free legal representation to low-income Virginia taxpayers in disputes with the Internal Revenue Service and the Virginia Department of Taxation. CTLP is based in Richmond, but works with volunteer attorneys and tax professionals around the Commonwealth. The staff and volunteers handle over 300 cases per year for clients who are at or below 250% of the federal poverty level, many of whom speak English as a second language and would have no other representation.

CTLP is working to expand its network of volunteers to include paralegals. There is no requirement for prior experience in the tax field, as they will train volunteers. If you are interested in this opportunity to offer your *pro bono* services, please contact Martha Munson at 437-3102 or mmunson@kolawfirm.com.



SHENANDOAH VALLEY PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

cordially invites you to our

2005 LAW DAY LUNCHEON

Thursday, May 26, 2005 at

Simple Pleasures

380 University Boulevard

Guest Speaker:

MARSHA GARST

Commonwealth's Attorney for the
City of Harrisonburg & Rockingham County

All local attorneys and paralegals are welcome to attend

Please RSVP by Monday, May 23, 2005

SVPA members: \$9.00, Attorneys & guests: \$11.00

Checks may be made payable to "SVPA"

To RSVP or for more information, please contact

Alex Wilmer (amw@littensipe.com) at 434-5353 or 437-3077(Fax)

What is Law Day?

In 1957, American Bar Association President Charles S. Rhyne envisioned a day set aside to specifically celebrate our nation's legal system. President Dwight D. Eisenhower proclaimed the first Law Day, USA on May 1, 1958. In 1961, Congress passed a joint resolution to recognize May 1 as Law Day. Although May 1 is the official date, Law Day may be celebrated on any date, typically in April or May.



Law Day provides all Americans the opportunity to celebrate our appreciation of our liberties and the ideals of equality and justice under the law. Every year Law Day is recognized across the United States by state and local bar associations, schools, national organizations and businesses.



LAW DAY 2005 GUEST SPEAKER: MARSHA GARST

We are very pleased to have Commonwealth's Attorney Marsha Garst as our 2005 Law Day guest speaker. Ms. Garst is a graduate of Turner Ashby High School, University of Virginia, and earned her Juris Doctor from George Mason University School of Law. Prior to becoming Commonwealth's Attorney, Ms. Garst was an attorney with Miller, Ralston & Earle and also served as Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney.

Ms. Garst has worked with a number of local non-profit organizations including the Boys & Girls Club of Harrisonburg and the Domestic Violence Task Force.

For Law Day, Ms. Garst will be discussing the spread of gangs and gang-related violence here in the Shenandoah Valley.

MS-13 gang branches out across U.S.

The rapid spread of vicious street gangs such as MS-13 is causing alarm in cities and suburbs nationwide, inspiring a comprehensive anti-gang bill in Congress.

Branches of the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang, 2004



SOURCE: Fairfax County, Virginia Police Department

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Recently, Ms. Garst has worked to raise awareness concerning the growing number of gangs and gang-related activities in the Valley. Gangs like MS-13 have spread in recent years, with Virginia experiencing one of the higher gang growth rates in the Nation. Local gang-related crimes have ranged from graffiti and vandalism to murder, as witnessed by the 2003 murder of Brenda Paz, a 17-year old from Northern Virginia whose body was found in Shenandoah County. She was murdered by members of an MS-13 gang.

Join a winning team!



SVPA members (front) Pam Wolford, Xaviera Chandler, Karen Texiere (back) Cathy Diehl, Ellen Pieszak, Alex Wilmer, & Charlie Chenault participated at the 2005 Bowl for Kids Sake Bowlathon in February. SVPA raised over \$600 to help Big Brothers Big Sisters of Harrisonburg & Rockingham County. Over \$64,000 was raised at this event in 2005.

For more information about joining SVPA, please contact Nancy Hodges at nlhodgesla04@yahoo.com or visit our Web site at www.geocities.com/svparalegal

COMMITTEE REPORTS



Treasurer's Report – There is a balance of \$2,116.14 in our treasury as of April 30, 2005.

Membership Committee Report – We currently have 22 paid members and there are no applications pending at this time.

Nancy Hodges
Treasurer and Chairperson of the Membership Committee

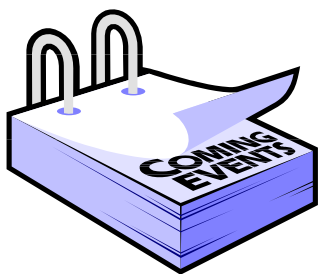
Program/Social Committee – In April, SVPA held a joint meeting with the Harrisonburg-Rockingham County Bar Association at Spotswood Country Club. L. Wayne Harper, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Harrisonburg & Rockingham County, led a discussion on the new computer system proposed for the clerk's office. Two representatives from the company designing the new software were on hand to discuss the software and answer some technical questions.

Our May business meeting will coincide with our commemoration of Law Day. Our Law Day luncheon will be held on Thursday, May 26 at Simple Pleasures. We are pleased to have Commonwealth's Attorney Marsha Garst as our guest speaker. Our luncheon will be open to all local attorneys and paralegals. Attendees may also sign up for a number of door prizes that we will give away on Law Day.

Charles R. Chenault
Chairperson of the Program/Social Committee

Alliance Committee - SVPA hosted the Spring VAPA meeting in Charlottesville on May 7, 2005. June M. Nabers, CLAS, and Martha M. Munson, CLA, represented SVPA at the meeting. The main discussion topics were the VAPA website, letterhead design, and 2006 Conference. In addition, 2005/06 elections were held, the 2005/06 budget was adopted, and discussions held on Paralegal's Week, assistance for the Community Tax Law Project, and North Carolina Regulation. The next VAPA meeting will be held September 17, 2005, when we hope to have a speaker from the North Carolina Paralegal Association regarding paralegal regulation.

Martha M. Munson, CLA
Chairperson of the Alliance Committee



CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

May 26th	Law Day Luncheon – Noon – Simple Pleasures Speaker: Marsha Garst, Commonwealth's Atty All attorneys and paralegals welcome to attend
June – Aug	Summer Break – no meetings
July 13 -16	30 th Annual NALA Convention – Kansas City
Aug 3	Executive Committee Mtg – Golden China
Sept 7	Executive Committee Mtg – (TBA)
Sept 14	Regular Business Mtg – (TBA)
Oct 3 – 7	Paralegal's Week



Shenandoah Valley Paralegal Association
P.O. Box 88
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22803

TO: