



THE INFORMER

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MISSION STATEMENT

NALS is dedicated to enhancing the competencies of members in the legal services profession. It accomplishes its mission and supports the public interest through:

- **Continuing legal education and resource materials**
- **Networking opportunities at the local, state, regional, and national levels**
- **Commitment to a Code of Ethics & Professional Responsibility**
- **Professional certification programs and designations**

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Robin Wilson, CLP

As my presidency comes to a close with the upcoming election, I would like to take this time to thank the Executive Board for their assistance these past two years. Their moral support, suggestions, and team work have been instrumental in the continuation of this Association; Vice President Darlene Howard-Holt, Secretary Patti Berman, PP, PLS, and Governor Lori Stewart, PP, PLS. I would also like to thank the newsletter editor, Juanita E. Singleton and nominating committee chair, Cheryl Blythers, ALP for such a great job! I also would like to thank all of the members that have been participating throughout these past two years as well and look forward to the new Board and their contributions to keep this Association moving forward.

NVLSA presently has 19 members and continues to be a strong Association. Over the past two years, we have modified our meetings (via teleconference), conducted fund raisers, attended socials, provided CLEs, donated to the VALS Scholarship, conducted raffles, contributed to charities and volunteered. Under the new regime, there will be more ideas and activities to participate in. Please support your Association so that it may continue to help someone else.

Congratulations to Dawn Resende of Roanoke Valley, our recipient of the Marje Harmon Convention scrip ticket.

It has been my pleasure to serve as your President and Treasurer and I am looking forward to the upcoming years NVLSA.

As my family says, May the Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from another. Amen

Welcome to Spring!

GOVERNOR'S REPORT

by Lori Stewart, PP, PLS

As your Governor for the past two years, I have enjoyed representing NVLSA at the VALS Board of Governors Meetings. I will be your Governor for the 2017-2019 term and after that term of office expires, I hope to turn over this wonderful and interesting position to one of you.

I joined NVLSA in 1995, and I think with the exception of 1 or 2 years, I have been an officer ever since. I have held every office at least once, some of them several times. I would like to encourage you all to consider becoming involved in our association and volunteer to be an officer. You won't regret it.

To paraphrase Mark Twain "Officers and diapers must be changed often, and for the same reason."

SECRETARY'S REPORT

by Patti Berman, PP

When I started to think about what to write as an article for this issue, I paused to reflect on the activities of this chapter over the past two years. As with many other chapters in this association, the struggle to recruit and retain is a constant problem. But a part of me always wonders why, because as a member for over 20 years, I can find more pros than cons in continuing my membership.

The top of my "list of benefits from membership" has to be my two exceptional lifelong friends, both of whom I met through attendance at NALS meetings. But aside from these two exceptional friends (and well skilled legal professionals), I have many other friends that I met as a result of my years of membership and attendance at local, state, regional and national meetings. And beyond that I have a long list of legal professionals that make up a gold mine of a network that I have utilized over and over again during the past.

I have not always had the benefit of being "close" to meetings – for nearly the majority of my time as a member, attendance at state meetings requires at least a one and a half hour drive, and not uncommon for it to be a three hour drive or longer, one way. For many, that seems like an outrageous distance to drive...and for what? What?! EDUCATION!! The educational benefits gained have far outweighed the cost and distance to attend. There are so many times when I learned something at a seminar that I used afterwards; it really is hard to believe you can get so much from these meetings!

I think back to a particular incident that happened while I was working for a sole practitioner in Oregon where I lived. His practice focused primarily on domestic relations and criminal law, but he maintained a general civil and litigation practice as well. I had just returned from a state meeting where one of the legal education seminars I attended was on Construction Law. It was not necessarily something I had an interest in or used, but I went anyway. Several days after my return, a client's mother came in and asked for a consultation on an issue she was having with the installation of a heat pump in her home. Afterwards, my boss came out and asked me to look up the law regarding the filing of a construction lien...the very topic I had just learned about! I went to my materials, confirmed the statute, pulled it up in our legal research program and provided him with the materials, all within a matter of minutes.

That was one of those moments when all the time and energy and money spent going to legal education seminars paid off, in a big way!

But there are plenty of other times when things I've learned have helped me along my way. While the business meetings may not be exciting, the parliamentary procedure you learn and the corporate structure it provides has been so helpful for me over the years. As my role now entails much more corporate work, those insights have proven to be extremely beneficial to me.

I hope my insight will help each of you to recommit to your continuing education and this association during the next two years. I do value the benefits of membership and would love to see our chapter grow and rekindle the excitement for education in our surrounding area.

I have sincerely enjoyed serving this chapter as Secretary. I have enjoyed getting to know all of you and work with the chapter as part of the executive committee.

There are several things I have accomplished in my role over the past 2 years that I am proud of. First, we have a spiffy new logo that we can use in our electronic format presence. And second, the NVLSA website has been up and running! While it is fairly basic and simple, it gives us the opportunity to reach out to members and new members with information.

I look forward to serving you as Vice President and I hope you will support me in that role. I would love to see our chapter become more active, hold more seminars, AND recruit new members to help us forge a new path forward.

Yours in friendship,
Patti Berman, PP
Secretary

WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE - HOW FAR HAVE WE COME?

By: Juanita E. Singleton

In honor of Women's International Day, I wanted to reflect on how far woman have come since the 1900s, in particularly in the legal field. Sharon Rowen, an attorney from Georgia came to speak at an event at Dentons US LLP and what she presented was not only very interesting, but historic. The title of her presentation was "Balancing the Scales: Women in the Law. While I will not get into the specifics of her written and presented materials, I will outline some very interesting facts that prompted me to research beyond the presentation.

In 1911, Minnie Anderson Hale graduated from law school and attempted to gain admission to practice law in the state of Georgia, an admission that was denied based on gender. Judge John T. Pendleton of the Fulton superior court refused to admit her based on the code regarding qualifications reading admission being granted to "any male citizen." Ms. Hale decided to fight this battle by introducing new legislature that would permit females to practice law in the state of Georgia. This uphill battle went from 1911 until 1916 when it was finally approved by congress to allow women to practice law in Georgia. [Please note that during this time, Virginia and Arkansas also refused women to practice law in their states.]

Another interesting point is the lower number of women attorneys in leadership roles as compared to male attorneys. The American Bar Association ("ABA") established in 1878, did not start keeping statistics on women in leadership positions until 2000; therefore tracking the career ladder of a female in law only began 17 years ago. Interestingly enough, the ABA, did not elect its first female president until 1995, Roberta Cooper Ramo from the state of New Mexico. She was elected 117 years after the ABA was established! Even more historic, Paulette Brown was elected in 2015 as the third female and first African American female to serve as president. Are we making progress; or should be much further along?

Upon discovering the above mentioned history, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 came to mind. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted to outlaw discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. This is an act of protection to be treated equally but one can always find ways to show bias when it comes to race, color, religion, national origin and yes, sex. For example, there's still a gender gap in pay when it comes to men vs. women. Women are still earning less than men in similar if not same roles. Let's move back a notch, women are not even advancing to those higher ranking positions as frequently as men. Women are being looked over for higher level positions such as CEO, partner, equity partner or any other top ranking position in the legal field or corporate world due to gender. The road to securing a partnership with a firm can be longer for a woman than a man. This is based on evidence that when a women goes out on maternity leave, her time away does not count towards her years of practice plus, the annual billable hours are decreased and most likely not met due to your decision to start a family. Therefore it can be a longer road. There are so many more examples displayed bias when it comes

to women being promoted to leadership positions. Research on this matter is very extensive and detailed; bringing awareness is only part of the solution.

In closing and touching back on women of firsts, I would like to acknowledge Robin Wilson, PLS for being the first African American president of NVLSA...*the association of legal professionals* and VALS...*the association of legal professionals!* Happy International Women's Day/Month.

Sources:

<http://libguides.law.uga.edu/GeorgiaWILL>

Sharon Rowen, Balancing the Scales: Women in Law Presentation at Dentons US LLP

Lists of Presidents of the American Bar Association - Wikipedia

US Senate Congress Joint Economic Committee - https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/0779dc2f-4a4e-4386-b847-9ae919735acc/gender-pay-inequality---us-congress-joint-economic-committee.pdf

DATES TO REMEMBER

Apr. 4, 2017 **Membership Meeting - Election of Officers**

Apr. 28-30, 2017 VALS Annual Convention, Roanoke, Va.

June 6, 2017 **Membership Meeting**

This is your chapter newsletter. We welcome articles, news stories, reports, and opinions. If you have anything you would like to announce or contribute, please submit your information to Robin Wilson, PLS, at robin.wilson@alexandria.gov by **May 26, 2017** for inclusion in the next issue of the newsletter.

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In the past NALS has offered 8 hours of CLE with their leadership development sessions at the NALS Annual Professional Development and Education Conference. In 2015, the NALS board decided to discontinue the NALS Annual Professional Development and Education Conference as of 2016. Since then the NALS Board along with the NALS Ed OnDemand Task Force have teamed together to determine the best action to continue offering leadership development and education to NALS members and future members. Out of this collaboration was the NALS Virtual Leadership Course and Education Conference.

NALS Resource Center, NALS Board, and NALS Ed OnDemand Task Force hope you partake of the 22 hours of CLE (the most of any NALS conference) that can be earned from registering for this online conference!

During the three-month period, NALS Resource Center staff and Ed OnDemand Task force will be releasing a variety of topics that are prerecorded and through our online learning management system. Upon registration, you will gain access to all tracks and courses to view and participate in.

Access Pricing and Registration

Early Bird Rate (February 1-15, 2017): \$250.00

Full Registration (After February 15, 2017): \$299.00

Registration will be open during the duration of the event.

By Mail: [Download the PDF registration form here.](#)

Release Dates & Sessions:

February 15, 2017 - NALS Leadership Course Release (earn up to 8 hours of CLE) (granted 30-day access)

This course is offered through NALS online learning system. **It covers topics that a chapter leader would need to start their term off on the right foot.**

Resources and information contained in the Course include such topics as: certification, education, marketing, membership, local and state program enhancement, personal and professional advancement, and special recognition programs to be used at the local and state levels, as well by you individually. This course is viewed as the “encyclopedia” to the inside look at NALS and what it has to offer to its leaders, members, and the legal profession. The course also contains helpful information, ideas, and resources for you to succeed as a leader.

It has also been enhanced with video and links on where to find tips and tricks to enhancing your members' experience with NALS.

March 20, 2017 - Professional Development and CLE (7 CLE Hours)

Session Titles:

- **The Art of Customer Service and How It Applies to Your Office**
- **How to Begin a Lunch and Learn Program**
- **It's All About the Ask: Inclusion, Engagement, and Enrollment**
- **Résumé Writing and Your Career**
- **Nuts and Bolts of Personal Injury** - A basic overview of the how's, why's, when's and what's, of plaintiff's personal injury will be presented to provide a better understanding of how a case is handled beginning from the moment the file is handed off to you.
- CLE Session TBD
- CLE Session TBD

April 1, 2017 - Professional Development and CLE (7 CLE Hours)

Session Titles:

- **Interesting Case Law**
- **Collecting Post-Judgment - Methods That Work**
- CLE Session TBD
- CLE Session TBD
- CLE Session TBD
- CLE Session TBD
- CLE Session TBD

**Subjects and titles may change based on availability.*

Receiving Your Sessions:

On the education release dates, listed above, you will receive a series of links to those education sessions.

Test your system and view an example of a session page by using this link: [Emotional Intelligence and Your Career Webinar](#)

CLE Information:

CLE Total: NALS provides an opportunity to earn 22 CLE hours in this series. Eight (8) hours can be earned by completing the Leadership Course and 14 hours from viewing all Professional Development and CLE sessions.

CLE Entries into NALS.org Account: It is the responsibility of each registrant to enter your viewed CLE within your professional development journals on your NALS.org account. [Here is a complete how-to on journal entries.](#)

Registrants cannot share the content of this conference or login details. Only paid registrants are allowed to add the provided CLE sessions to their NALS.org Professional Development Journal.

For more information, log on to

<https://www.nals.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=916482&group=>