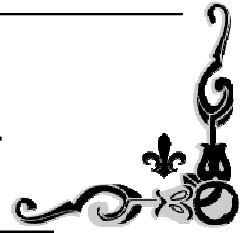


Fleur de Legal

The Official Publication of the New Orleans Paralegal Association



Is Your Career Stuck in the “Someday” Trap?

By Vicki Voisin, ACP

When opportunities come your way, do you usually say, "I'll do that when I have time!"? When you consider your career goals, do you usually think, "I'll get around to that in the future!"? When the sticky notes and piles of papers and files accumulate in your office, do you usually think, "I can't be bothered with that so I'll ignore the clutter for now!"? You may be stuck in the “someday” trap!

The “someday” trap brings your goals to a standstill. It plays havoc with your future. It kills productivity. It causes procrastination. If you allow yourself to let “someday” be a part of your thinking you're going to find it very difficult to move your career forward and reach your life goals.

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Consider :

- Someday you'll sit for a certification exam.
- Someday you'll move to that area of the law that really interests you.
- Someday you'll join your local association, join a committee and run for office.
- Someday you'll attend a national convention.
- Someday you'll take a few continuing education courses.
- Someday you'll present a CLE course.
- Someday you'll write an article for a professional journal.

Someday...someday...someday. Stop! Someday is NOT a day of the week. How about a new way of thinking? How about having “someday” be today?

Think, first, about your top 5 short term goals, perhaps what you want to accomplish in the next 90 days. Then examine those goals to determine the steps you'll take to reach them. Once you've done this, schedule the steps so that they get done. Once you've determined your short term goals, use the same process to determine and accomplish your long term. goals (say in the next 3 years), and your really long term goals...what do you want to accomplish in your lifetime. As you're
(Continued on page 6)

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Special Points of Interest:

- NOPA's First Annual Paralegal Career Day
- NOPA's new Metairie Chapter
- 2012 NFPA Scholarships and Awards

KEYS TO COMMUNICATION

By: Becky Rolland

NOPA's April General Membership featured Glen Millet from Glen Michael's Salon and Bonnie Schloegel from Bonnie Training. We learned “Five Steps to Handling Conflict” from Glen:

1. Handle conflicts in a timely manner - things always get worse when not handled right away
2. Invite the other person to talk about the situation first - seek first to understand then be understood
3. Listen with intent to truly hear - tell the other person you understand how they feel
4. Apologize - Take responsibility for your part in the situation
5. Develop a Plan of Action - Try to figure out a positive outcome for all involved.

From Bonnie, we learned “15 Cool Outlook Tricks” from emailing your calendar to how to make rules (Continued on page 6)



NOTEWORTHY



Opinions & Editorials

HIGHLIGHTS OF NOPA'S 2012 SALARY SURVEY

by: Becky Rolland, RP

The results of the 2012 Salary Survey reflect that the New Orleans Paralegal Association is an experienced and educated group of paralegals who want higher compensation and are willing to invest the time into improving their skills by participating in continuing legal education (CLE) and participating in pro bono activities. Out of the 87 who participated in the 2012 Salary Survey:

- 41.2% had more than 15 years experience;
- 82.8 % completed a paralegal studies program;
- 63.9% had earned a Bachelor's Degree and 22.9 % had earned an Associate's Degree;
- 16.8% earn \$20,000 to \$35,999 per year, 31.2% earn \$36,000 to \$50,999, 49.40% earn \$51,000 to \$65,999, and 2.4% earn over \$70,000 per year;
- 80.2% would agree to a CLE requirement and a minimum of pro bono hours if it meant recognition by the local or state bar associations;
- 81.3% believe that the definition of paralegal should include having earned your paralegal certificate and 84.8% believe CLE's should be required;
- 72.9% are responsible for billing their time, of which 46.9% bill \$ 80-120 per hour and 54.3% bill 1401 to 1800 hours per year.

Thanks to everyone who participated. You have made it easier for us to move forward in the paralegal profession!

NOTICE: NOPA EXPANDS TO METAIRIE

The Board of Director's voted to add a Metairie Chapter to the New Orleans Paralegal Association on Wednesday, June 6, 2012. Along with the new Metairie Chapter, there are plans to add future chapters in Gretna, St. Charles Parish and the Northshore. Because we are in mid year, the Board would like to appoint an interim director of the new Metairie Chapter. This interim director will hold office until the general election in January, 2013. The Board is proposing the following amendment to the NOPA By-laws (**changes in red**). **If anyone has an objection to the proposed resolution, please notify the board in writing no later than July 18 at 5 pm.**

Resolution No. 5 to add Chapter Directors : Amend 7.1 Number and Qualifications: The officers of the Association shall be chosen by the voting members of the Association at the Annual Meeting and shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a NFPA Primary Representative, a NFPA Secondary Representative, **and Chapter Directors** except for the Board Advisor, which position shall be filled by the immediate past president of the Association, or by board appointee, as described in Section 7.2(g). The officers shall have such authority and responsibility to perform such duties in the management of the affairs of the Association as may be determined by resolutions of the Board of Directors or these By-Laws. The officers together with the Standing Committee Chairpersons shall serve as an Executive Committee of the Association. **NEW 7.2 Duties of Officers. 2(h) Chapter Directors. The Board of Directors shall appoint interim Chapter Directors that shall represent particular chapters of the Association at the Board of Directors meetings; the Chapter Director shall be responsible for reporting to the Board the status of Chapter meetings and membership growth. The Chapter Director will schedule general membership meetings in the chapter area and shall perform such other duties and have other such powers as the Board of Directors shall establish.**

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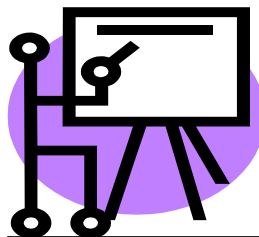
NOPA News



Current Events

SAVE THESE DATES

- Pro Bono Expungement Clinic July 6
- Paralegal Career Day - July 11
- Annual Dinner Meeting and Silent Auction July 19 , Key note speaker—John Young
- Annual Educational Seminar - October 26
- NOPA's Christmas Party - December 19



**NOPA'S FIRST
ANNUAL PARALEGAL
CAREER DAY**

Wednesday, July 11, 11 am to 1 pm

**JOIN US AT: CENTURION RISK ASSOC.
935 GRAVIER ST., SUITE 600
NEW ORLEANS, LA (504) 302-4978**

**LUNCH PROVIDED BY:
NEXT GENERATION, LLC**

- COME LEARN HOW TO ENHANCE YOUR CAREER THROUGH CERTIFICATION!
- FIND OUT ABOUT PARALEGAL STUDIES PROGRAMS AND CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES!
- GET INFORMATION ABOUT BEING A NOTARY!

New Orleans Paralegal Association

Presents

Annual Dinner Meeting

Speaker: John Young

Jefferson Parish President

When: Thursday, July 19, 2012

Where: Impastatos Restaurant

3400 16th Street

Metairie, Louisiana

Time: Silent Auction, Networking &

Cocktails 5:30 PM - 6:30 pm

Dinner 7:00 PM

Cost: Includes Four Course Dinner

Members—\$ 35 GUESTS— \$ 40

(\$ 45.00 and \$40.00 after July 13th)

For More Information

And To Register, Please Visit

www.nopa.onefireplace.com

(There will be no refunds after July 13th)

Silent Auction And Door Prizes

Will Be Announced At 8:15 p.m.

You Must Be Present To Win



AGENDA

11:00 am - 11:30 am

**Individual Resume Critiques
by Shuart & Associates**

11:30 am - 12:00 pm

**“Breaking into the Paralegal Industry”
by Sandra Olinde, MLA, Project Manager of the
U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Division**

12:00 pm - 12:30 pm

**Individual Resume Critiques by Strategic
Recruitment Solutions**

1:00 pm - 1:30 pm

**“Advancing Your Career with Technology” by
Lori Spooner of Docusource**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION or TO SET UP
YOUR RESUME CRITIQUE APPOINTMENT,
CONTACT SANDY CANTRELL, NOPA's JOB
BANK FACILITATOR AT 504-299-2981
OR EMAIL Sandra.R.Cantrell@usdoj.gov**



NFPA News

Current Events



SCHOLARSHIP AND AWARDS DEADLINE JULY 1, 2012

July 1st is the postmark deadline for submission of your applications for the NFPA/Thomson Reuters 2012 scholarships for paralegals students, and also for getting in those nominations for NFPA awards. There are two scholarships available to paralegal students, \$3,000 and \$2,000, and each carries with it a travel stipend allowing the winners to attend the 2012 NFPA Annual Convention in Anchorage, September 27 - 30, 2012, to accept the awards in person.

Award nominations are being accepted for: NFPA member association for its pro bono work; an individual NFPA member for his/her participation in pro bono activities; an Outstanding Local Leader; recognition of a Certification Ambassador; recognition of the NFPA Paralegal of the Year; and honoring an NFPA member for their contributions to the paralegal profession with the William Robie Award.

More information is available at <http://www.paralegals.org/default.asp?page=9> or contact vppd@paralegals.org. You can view the [2012 Awards Brochure](#), download the [Thomson Reuters/NFPA scholarship application](#), or the [NFPA Award Procedures](#) that describe how to apply/nominate for the other awards, though where applications are mentioned in the procedures use a letter format instead.

Important! Incomplete applications/nominations will be ineligible for consideration. When multiple copies of a document are specified, they are required. Application packets and nominations postmarked after July 1 will be ineligible.

THE NFPA JOINT CONFERENCE IS IN NEW ORLEANS IN 2013 IT IS TIME TO GET INVOLVED

Plans are already underway for the NFPA Joint Conference to be held in New Orleans in April, 2013. The annual NFPA Joint Leadership/Regulation/Certification Ambassadors Conference is one of the most popular and most beneficial gatherings for paralegal leaders in their local association and their community. Attendees have the opportunity to share and network with professionals regarding association leadership, certification and regulation within the paralegal profession. **NFPA members may attend all three conferences for free.** Non-members may attend the Regulation conference for an additional fee.

Last year it was held in Nashville, TN and the agenda was as follows: Friday 's Regulation Conference highlighting how to become your own lobbyist and to draft legislation for your association among other topics, Saturday 's Leadership Conference featured how to develop your own leadership style, how to build consensus, commitment and cooperation and the 7 skills of effective leadership, among other topics and Sunday's Certification Conference featured how to work your way towards Paralegal Certification as well as how to navigate through the exams.

NOPA will be forming a special committee to help facilitate the Joint Conference being held in our city. If you ever thought about getting more involved, we could really use your help. This is the time for NOPA to put its best foot forward and show paralegals around the country who we are and how proud we are of our city.

We will need to help NFPA set up speakers for this event, plan a night time social, provide information about where to eat and what to do while they are here, give them contact information for vendors who may want to exhibit and last but not least make sure we have a great attendance from the gulf south region.

Please consider joining us in making this event memorable for everyone involved. We would like to have the committee up and running by mid October, giving us 6 months to work on the event and its promotion. If you want to know more information, feel free to contact Becky Rolland at (504) 236-7919 or broll978@aol.com.

NOPA in NOLA

Members in & Around the City

Spotlight on Sustaining Member Brooke Staffing

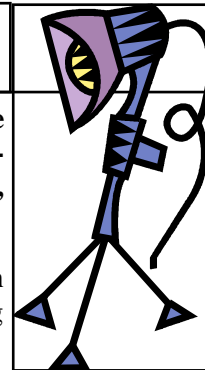
In 1989, Brooke Companies, Inc. (Brooke) was founded by Susan Krohn, CPC, and CTS to provide employment solutions for the business community. Brooke Companies is a woman owned and operated company that is respected throughout the Southeast area as experts in the placement of Accounting, Legal, and General Office Support positions.

To enable Brooke in meeting its mission of becoming a \$100 million dollar company by 2017, expansion was planned for spring 2006. Hurricane Katrina expedited those plans, and Brooke opened a servicing branch and moved their corporate headquarters to Houston, Texas, in September 2005.

Brooke has demonstrated a clear and sustained capacity for creativity and innovation in the development and implementation of its major service – the human element. The success Brooke enjoys promotes self-worth in each candidate and employee. Susan Krohn, Owner, was honored as an YLC Role Model for the year 2000 and was recently awarded the Professional Women First Award.

The corporate culture at Brooke recognizes, respects, and rewards employees who create a dynamically explosive environment. It promotes creative problem solving, individual development and the opportunity to excel.

Brooke is also deeply involved with our local communities and is active in many professional and service organizations: Local areas Chamber of Commerce, Each One, Save One, Legal Secretaries associations, Paralegal Associations, Louisiana Staffing Association, Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk and the National Association of Personnel Consultants



NOPA WANTS YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN THE EXPUNGEMENT CLINIC ON JULY 6, 2012 FROM 10 AM TO 3 PM



In order to accomplish NOPA's goals of growing our Pro Bono Division, creating more visibility for our association and eventually making our way into the local and state bar associations. **WE FIRST NEED TO DO OUR PART AND VOLUNTEER.**

The New Orleans Paralegal Association is partnering with the justice and Accountability Center of Louisiana, AIDS LAW, and NO AIDS Task Force by volunteering for the Expungement Clinic to be held on Friday, July 6, 2012, from 10 am-3 pm at 2601 Tulane Ave., 2nd Floor. New Orleans, LA. **Contact NOPA's Pro Bono Coordinator, Christal Hurst for more details at churst@aidslaw.org or 504-568-1631 ext 790.** Please help NOPA by volunteering for this great cause!

What is Expungement? The moment an individual is arrested by the police and taken into custody, that individual has a criminal history, regardless whether the individual is charged with a crime. The consequences of a criminal arrest or conviction, known as **collateral consequences**, can be severe, unexpected, and long lasting. **Even after an acquittal or the completion of any sentence imposed, the following can be affected: employment opportunities, the right to vote, access to government benefits and other assistance including: housing, Social Security benefits, food stamps, financial aid for college or technical training and parental rights.** An expungement is removal of a person's history of criminal arrest from the public record. The process can be complicated and varies in every court. Unfortunately, although there is no uniformity and transparency in the process, however obtaining an expungement can help to reduce the effect of collateral consequences. Expungement will not: Destroy or erase your records temporarily or permanently, remove the record from most government agencies reach, restore your driving privileges if your arrest/conviction lead to a suspension of your drivers license, relieve your responsibilities to register as a sex offender with the State or restore your rights to possess a firearm.



KEYS TO COMMUNICATION (continued from page 1)

and delay delivery of emails. NOPA thanks both of them for taking their time to speak to us! I also wanted to share the "20 Keys to Communication" reprinted from [Lessons from the Top Paralegal Experts](#) by Carole A. Bruno:

1. Know your audience.
2. Make sure you spell the recipient's name correctly.
3. Use layman's terms when writing a client.
4. If you are using a term that your audience may not be aware of, make sure you define the term.
5. Stay focused on the goals of your communication.
6. State the reason for your communication in the "RE" line or first sentence of the letter. This is especially important with emails as they may be filed in sub-folders in your computer files according to client and subject matter.
7. When appropriate, include the facts and circumstances that led to the communication.
8. If you are requesting documentation or a eliciting a response from the reader, include the pending deadline or a follow-up date.
9. Write in the active voice.
10. Use clear, precise, and simple sentences.
11. If you are using more than two commas, try to simplify the sentence.
12. Avoid unnecessary superlatives.
13. Do not use slang, contractions, or too many abbreviations.
14. Maintain professionalism at all times.
15. Make sure you remain within your paralegal ethical boundaries. In other words, NEVER give legal advice.
16. Double check punctuation, especially double negatives, misspelled words, and run-on sentences.
17. Mark the file location at the bottom of the document.
18. Make sure you mail out the final version of the correspondence.
19. Maintain a copy of all correspondence, sorted according to date.
20. PROOF READ.

Is Your Career Stuck in the 'Someday' Trap? (continued from page 1)

doing this, don't hesitate to dream and to think big. Do not limit yourself.

For all these goals, make an appointment in your calendar to get each step done and don't let the 'someday trap' stop you. You can't do everything at once, of course, so you'll have to make choices. You'll have to choose to do the things that are important to you and your goals and let the other things go. When you change your thinking to 'today' instead of 'someday' you're not only going to feel better about yourself, but you'll move your career in the right direction: forward. Imagine, seizing opportunities when they come your way. Imagine your office without clutter and piles. Imagine being able to find documents when you need them. Imagine the feeling of accomplishment as you reach your goals. When you imagine that it feels wonderful, right? Actress Camryn Manheim said it best: "Waiting, waiting, waiting. All my life, I've been waiting for my life to begin, as if somehow my life was ahead of me, and that someday I would arrive at it."

You can't wait for your life to begin or for your paralegal career to be what you want it to be. You have to operate on the premise that you can't wait for someday to make changes. You have to take steps today to make those changes. What are you waiting for? You have the ability to transform your career and your life beginning today. It's up to you to make that happen and to stop waiting for someday. What changes will you make? How will you make those changes? I'd love to hear from you.

Vick 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 <http://www.paralegalmentor.com>.