

President's Message

Belinda T. Pruitt, CLAS



Nearly a year has passed since I was elected President. I can hardly believe it! This has been a very busy year and one that has been a learning experience. The Executive Committee and the Board have been very supportive and have made very sound decisions on behalf of the membership. I

want to especially thank Theresa (Terry) Irvin, CLA, who has made my job easy. Terry helped me make it through a very rough time in my personal life the very first week of my term as President. I will be forever grateful.

Our attorney advisors have been a tremendous help to us in making decisions with the Association regarding our Registered Agent, the "politics" surrounding the Paralegal Profession Act and our role in the Alliance for Paralegal Professional Standards. Thank you to Mr. Wiley P. Wooten and Ms. Teresa Brenner for your help. We would be lost without your assistance.

Our Educational Advisor, Susan McIntyre has been a great help in advising us regarding the accreditation issues with the schools. She also keeps us apprized of the changes in the Community College System and the programs that are offered. We are very fortunate to have Ms. McIntyre on board with us in this capacity.

The Officers of NCPA are the best. Anita Watts Wing and Darlene Patz have served as First Vice President and Second Vice President respectively.

Our seminars are the best and our membership directory is beyond compare. Thanks for a job well done.

Susan Shaw, CLAS, Secretary and Patricia C. Clapper, CLA, Treasurer, have jobs that I really am not interested in having! They have faithfully carried out their duties and have done so without complaint. We appreciate their attention to detail that keeps NCPA out of trouble and saves us money.

Our NALA Liaison, Sarah C. Hutchins, CLA, has kept our reports up to date and represented us well at the NALA Convention. Our Parliamentarian, Sherry Vaughan, CLA has worked hard to keep our bylaws current and to brave the storm with changes.

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We have an army of Committees and Board Members who devote their time to NCPA. Thanks to each of you for your dedication to the Association. You have all gone beyond the call of duty to see that your work is done. Mary Haggerty, CLA, our NCPA Coordinator deserves a medal for all she handles for us (all of which is done without completely pulling her hair out!)

As you can tell, I am very proud of all the officers, directors and committee chairs of NCPA. They are a wonderful group who take pride in volunteering in this wonderful Association. My hat is off to you and hope that you will always be an active part of NCPA.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank the membership of NCPA for supporting me this past year. I hope that you will consider being more actively involved in NCPA. We are a wonderful Association who are truly concerned about the advancement of our profession. Please contact me if you are interested in serving on a committee, planning a seminar or just to offer opinions. Your ideas are always welcome.



Editor's Court

Brenda Mareski, CLA, Senior Editor

Governor Mike Easley has proclaimed March 14-20, 2004 as "Paralegal Week." What a wonderful recognition of the skill and professionalism of our North Carolina paralegals! In celebration of Paralegal Week, and in order to coincide with our Annual Meeting and Seminar to be held March 18-20 in Raleigh, this issue of the NCPA FORUM brings you articles written about or by North Carolina paralegals. I am very pleased and proud to be able to claim that Jennifer Swails, CLA of Raleigh was named the 2003 Paralegal Rookie of the Year by *Legal Assistant Today* magazine!

Tammy Wallace, a patent paralegal in Charlotte, and Kaye H. Summers, CLA, of Durham, both had articles published in recent issues of NALA's *Facts and Findings*, and Cary, NC's Sarah Kaufman, CLA, was recently a featured contributor in Wake County Paralegal Association's *The Paralegal Times*. North Carolina is very fortunate to have these, and many, many other talented, committed professionals working as paralegals and legal assistants. Feel proud - you're in good company!

