

Message **PRESIDENT'S**

by Theresa (Terry) Irvin, CLA



"That which we persist in doing becomes easier for us to do; not that the nature of the thing itself is changed, but that our power to do is increased." -Ralph Waldo Emerson

This will be my final message to you as President. While it seems cliché, the last two years have passed by rather quickly. I have thoroughly enjoyed this office and I encourage you to seek the opportunities for advancement within this Association. Volunteering for a committee chair is a great way to become acquainted with how the association is run and what business is conducted.

Our membership represents fifty-five counties. We have members that work for sole practitioners and members that work for the top law firms in the country. The same mirrors the corporate world. We have members in small in-house legal departments and members who work in the legal departments of publicly traded companies. We have members who are employed by governments - local, county and state. We have members who freelance and members who teach. All of our members have at least two things in common. They are paralegals/legal assistants and they work under the supervision of an attorney.

The officers, directors and committee chairs are representative of the membership. By serving the association, you have a direct connection to the inner workings of the

Association and the decisions made by the Association to further advance the profession and benefit the membership.

It is easy to state the many reasons on why to volunteer and the benefits derived from service. However, to truly understand what is attained by giving a little of your time and talent to this Association, you need to actually become involved. I was talking to First Vice President Anita Wing about the time she gives and her decision to run for a second term. As she stated, "I do this for me." Anita went on to say that she was choosy about her volunteer time, and realized NCPA is a wonderful and professional organization. While she is heavily involved in church, school and family activities, she feels the time she gives to NCPA benefits her individually and her family (and her employer) supports her in this effort.

If you turn to the back of this issue, you will see the many positions available in NCPA; some are more challenging and time sensitive than others. However, each position offers unique responsibilities and duties to expand upon your individual expertise and talent.

At the March Membership Meeting, you will elect new officers to lead the association for the 2003-2004 term. New Committee Chairs will be appointed and this will be your chance to become an active member in your Association. I encourage you to seek out the Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs during the Annual Seminar (or before) and ask them about their duties. They all have commitments that vie for their precious spare time, but they have

chosen to donate a portion of that time to further the goals of NCPA. You might pose "Why?" as the first question. I guarantee you will receive a host of different responses, all circling around a common theme - "Because it is rewarding." The old Reader's Digest mantra - "You can't win if you don't enter" may be rewritten to "You can't be rewarded if you don't volunteer."

On a personal note I would like to thank all of the Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs who served during the last two years. I am limited here to only express in words how deeply appreciative I am for their support. This office holds many challenges and it was through that support and the support of past presidents, which gave me the ability to meet those challenges. NCPA is an incredibly dynamic organization and this office provides the opportunity to experience it first hand. And yes, if you ask me "Why?" I will give you several reasons and end with "Because it was rewarding."

If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a State to run NCPA. I challenge you, the member, to further strengthen NCPA, seek active involvement and begin experiencing the rewards.

"Some people give time, some money, some their skills and connections, some literally give their life's blood. But everyone has something to give." -Barbara Bush