

# CHAIRMAN'S *Report*

by Belinda T. Pruitt, CLAS



In this the first issue of THE FORUM for the 2002-2003 year, I want to introduce myself, your new Chairman of the Board. I graduated from Liberty University in 1987. In 1989, I began working with the firm of Vernon, Vernon, Wooten, Brown, Andrews & Garrett, P.A., in Burlington, North Carolina as a legal secretary in the domestic practice (what an eye opener!) I had no previous experience in the legal field and was I ever overwhelmed! Two years later I became the litigation paralegal for our section. I decided after just a few days that I needed to know a lot more than I did! My supervising attorney, Wiley P. Wooten, Esquire, was a great encouragement to me then as he is now. He suggested my involvement in NCPA and told me to start attending seminars. I asked a lot of questions and he graciously answered them. I completed my paralegal certificate in 1993, received the CLA designation in 1994 and a specialty in Civil Litigation in 1996. Every day is a learning experience after all these years. One thing is certain, I'm never bored! At the Annual Seminar and Convention in New Bern this past March, I was elected as your Chairman of the Board. I was excited, yet very nervous. The first week was incredible. I never knew emails could come in so fast. I began to just print them off and use them for reading material at night! The second week, I

had finally gotten over the shock and was able to organize my thoughts and all the duties. Theresa Irvin, CLA, your President, has been a great help to me already. I would have been lost those first few weeks without her. I am very excited about this new role with NCPA and I have big plans! I want YOU included in those plans and hope that you will feel free to contact me with any concerns and suggestions. One of my goals is to have a Saturday morning "Meet and Greet" in each District. I want to get to know you and listen to your ideas for NCPA. The tentative schedule for those meetings is as follows:

- District I** - October 19, 2002 in Jacksonville
- District II** - January 25, 2003 in Raleigh
- District III** - June 29, 2002 in Fayetteville
- District IV** - September 21, 2002 in Burlington
- District V** - November 16, 2002 in Charlotte
- District VI** - July 13, 2002 in Boone
- District VII** - September 13, 2002 in Asheville
- District VIII** - August 24, 2002 in Greenville
- District IX** - July 13, 2002 in Boone

Please plan to take an active role in NCPA this year. We have a wonderful association. We want to take every opportunity to share our talents and support those who are entering this profession. We are only as strong as our membership. Get involved today!



## Calendar OF EVENTS

**July 10-13, 2002**  
NALA Convention 2002  
Savannah, Georgia

**September 13-14, 2002**  
Mid-Year Seminar CLA  
Review Course, Asheville, NC

**November 2, 2002**  
NCPA EC/Board Meeting  
Raleigh

**January 11, 2003**  
NCPA EC/Board Meeting  
Burlington

**March 20-22, 2003**  
NCPA's 23rd Annual Meeting & Seminar  
Wrightsville Beach, NC

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