



# THE BRIEF

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITAL AREA  
PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2019

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Unless you've been living under a rock, it's no secret that "self-care" and "wellness" are topics making their way into everyday conversation and social media. Luckily, they're no longer just trends – they're a movement. I thought the incoming fall season and all of its thoughts of cozy sweaters and bundled-up weekends would be a good time for a few self-care reminders as we head into the busy end of the year and the holiday season.

1. It's okay to say "no".

You may be the go-to person at your office, the best advice-giver of your circle of friends, or the parent that the school's PTA knows it can rely on for picking up that last-minute slack, but you cannot be all of the things, all at the same time. When you spread yourself between all of the tasks or requests from others in your life, you're only giving a small portion of your talents to each area. Saying "I don't have the capacity for that right now, but thanks for thinking of me" is a great way to set a boundary for others and give yourself space and time to give more to things that are MOST important to you.

2. Know when it's time to take a break

Let's be real – taking a lunch break every day is hard. If you're like me, you look at the clock and realize it's 2:30 pm and the "lunch hour" has passed. I'm not against having lunch at your desk, if that's what the day calls for, but remember that your brain needs a break. Your brain may start to tire out before your body does. Try planning a few strategically placed mental breaks throughout the day – stop by a co-worker's desk for a brief chat about something unrelated to work, go across the street for an afternoon coffee/tea, or mindlessly scroll through your news feed or favorite websites. The key is to give your brain a break from constant detailed processing and giving your stress level a chance to mellow.

3. Celebrate #wins

If you made it to work on a Monday morning without incident, that's a #win and you should celebrate it! When the day is full of lots of small errors, irritations, and hiccups, it's important to keep your mood elevated by recognizing everything that went well. Surround yourself with people who can help you celebrate the #wins throughout your week. Having someone celebrate your small #wins with you makes them that much more valuable.

4. Remember the basics – food, water, sleep

You're not going to be helpful to yourself or anyone else without the basics – food, water, sleep. Did you know that dehydration can cause brain fog and mood swings? If you're on edge at the office, grab a bottle of water and chug it. Even when you don't have time for a traditional lunch break, grab a quick nutrient rich snack to keep going. For most professionals, eight hours of sleep is sometimes unrealistic, but making the effort to designate one mid-week night that you will attempt to get as much sleep as possible is helpful. And remember, if you've followed tip #1, you may have more time in the evenings to dedicate to sleep.

I hope you'll take some time for yourself over the next couple of weeks. Do you have any tips? Share with us on CAPA's [Discussion Forum](#).

Happy Fall Y'all ~

Brittany Posadas  
CAPA President 2019-2020

### IN THIS ISSUE

- Travis County District Clerk Update
- October event calendar
- Article: Why is There a Texas Paralegal Day?

# 2019-2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# BOARD SPOTLIGHT

## TREASURER



Hello CAPA! I'm Jen Rogers, your CAPA 2019 – 2020 Treasurer. Full disclosure, I'm also a Past-President of CAPA but funnily enough, I was never involved in any other capacity on the Board and I've been interested for some time in serving in a different way. I got lucky and the stars aligned this year to offer me that opportunity. I've also recently transitioned firms and am now working with the Renewable Energy (Regulatory and Real Estate) teams at Husch Blackwell LLP. Some of you may know that I've spent a significant portion of my career working in oil and gas law. So, naturally, as soon as they created a TBLS specialty in that field, I changed types of law! But seriously, I'm super excited to be working on the future of energy production for Texas.

As CAPA's Treasurer, I'm responsible for managing the funds coming in and going out for CAPA, keeping the books updated, reporting to the Board on the status of our accounting, watching the budget, and ensuring that our tax records are filed timely. It's a fiduciary responsibility to the organization and I'm honored to be serving in this capacity to support CAPA. As personal CFO at home, and as a former bank teller (in college), I've certainly had some experience balancing a checkbook or two. In addition, I feel grateful to have the knowledgeable support of our former CAPA Treasurers so I'm not out here alone! Our CAPA network helps me out in so many ways, I'm always happy to call you all friends.

# COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

The purpose of the Public Relations Committee is to promote CAPA as a professional organization, and to educate all the members and the public as to our many benefits and programs. Some of the committee's tasks include monitoring and updating social media accounts, promoting events and membership, organizing event photographers, scheduling greeters, and working with other organizations and paralegal schools to further the profession. Please let the Chair know if you have any suggestions or if there is anything you would like to see from the Committee. Make sure to FOLLOW CAPA ON [FACEBOOK](#), [INSTAGRAM](#), and [LINKEDIN](#), and please send the committee any photos that you take at CAPA events so that they can be posted on our pages!!



PR Chair Francesca Romans also serves as Co-Chair for the Membership, TBLS Study Group, Rules & Bylaws, and Sustaining Member Liaison Committees. She has worked in school law with Eichelbaum Wardell Hansen Powell & Muñoz, P.C. since 2004. Francesca and her husband Lee spend their free time learning the rules of Pokémon and discussing the finer points of being an alien shape-shifter with their sons, David and Nicholas.

Email the PR Committee at [pr@capatx.org](mailto:pr@capatx.org).

# October 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 CAPA Board Meeting
6 CP Study Group (north location)	7	8	9	10	11 Lunch & Learn	12
13	14	15	16  BOSS'S DAY	17	18	19
20	21	22	23  PARALEGAL DAY	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 Membership Meeting & CLE luncheon	31  HALLOWEEN		

## UPCOMING EVENTS

(Click the links for details/registration)

- Oct 05 [October Board Meeting](#)
- Oct 06 [NALA Study Group \(north\)](#)
- Oct 11 [CAPA and Paralegal Division District 4 Lunch & Learn CLE Event: "Ethical Duties and Electronically Stored Information"](#)
- Oct 23 [Paralegal Day Celebration](#)
- Oct 30 [October Membership Meeting and CLE Luncheon: "What is Animal Law and Why Should We Care About It?"](#)

## October birthdays

**Viktoriiia Afanasieva**

**Mary Alford**

**Andres Alvarez**

**Sandra Blackard**

**Brenda Colvin**

**Joyce Goodman**

**Amy Igo**

**Susan Landua**

**Rocio Lewis**

**Alice Lineberry**

**Mary Mireles**

**Eric Moring**

**Celeste Rodriguez**

**Jennifer Washington**

**Anna Weber**

**Alexis Zepeda**

Did we miss your birthday? [Log in and update your member profile](#), or [let us know](#).

# CONGRATS!

**NANCY MCLAUGHLIN  
SCHOLARSHIP**

**WINNER**

**WINSTON WRIGHT**

**CONGRATULATIONS ON BEHALF OF  
THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

**CAPITAL AREA PARALEGAL  
ASSOCIATION**

**READ THE  
SCHOLARSHIP WINNER'S  
ESSAY BELOW**

## **What is a Paralegal?**

By Winston D Wright

A symphony cannot be heard without the backbone of its orchestra. Every movement, each crescendo and decrescendo leading all the way to the sonata is carried with grace and confidence from the core of these dedicated musicians who are heard but seldom seen.

Nonetheless, brilliant works of music are birthed and played before the people and the notes become alive drawing emotion from the listener.

This speaks truth to the world of Litigation. The years, the months, the weeks, days, and sometimes minutes all the way down to the seconds of a deadline for a case and its client is carried out by the backbone of its Legal Team, the Paralegal.

We review and organize client files, conduct factual and legal research, prepare documents for legal transactions, draft pleadings and discovery notices, interview clients and witnesses, and assist at closings and trials. We find key pieces of evidence that help our Attorneys win their case. We work these simple miracles and keep moving until it is time for us to hang up the gloves. Whether that is retirement, vacation, or turning over to the next profession in our brilliant lives it is up to us to decide where and when we do this. Until then, we work and master our case load so that the client and all those involved come out ahead.

Yet, in the modern world a Paralegal is an Entrepreneur. We have inherited the digital age at a wonderful time in its development. So that we can market legal services from all over the world, making connections along the way. We can offer our skill set at any time from any place so long as we have accessibility to the internet. Working for ourselves, we make our own schedule, so that we have the availability to do the things that matter most to us, such as spending time with family and loved ones. While we cheer and praise those who paved the way for this profession from the 1960's to present day, it is our time to lay down the foundation for this profession and what it can be in the digital era. *"Change is the law of Life, and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."* – JFK

As Paralegals, what we bring to the legal team cannot be overstated. Nor can it be downloaded onto a hard drive. What we do is profound and fundamental for the success of our Attorneys and our clients. We keep tempo and march forward until all the midnight oil is burned and then we light another lantern, begin a new case, and continue to make a difference in the legal community. We are the backbone of litigation and its delicate process. We are dedicated and driven towards excellence and accept nothing less than perfection.

This is what makes us an invaluable member of the legal team and that is what a paralegal is in its purest form. ■

OCTOBER 23

# TEXAS PARALEGAL DAY

"Through their exceptional talents and expertise, paralegals provide valuable services that contribute significantly to the efficient functioning of the judicial system in the Lone Star State, and they are indeed worthy of special recognition."

## Why is there a Texas Paralegal Day?

*Submitted by Stephanie R. Sterling, TBLS-BCP*

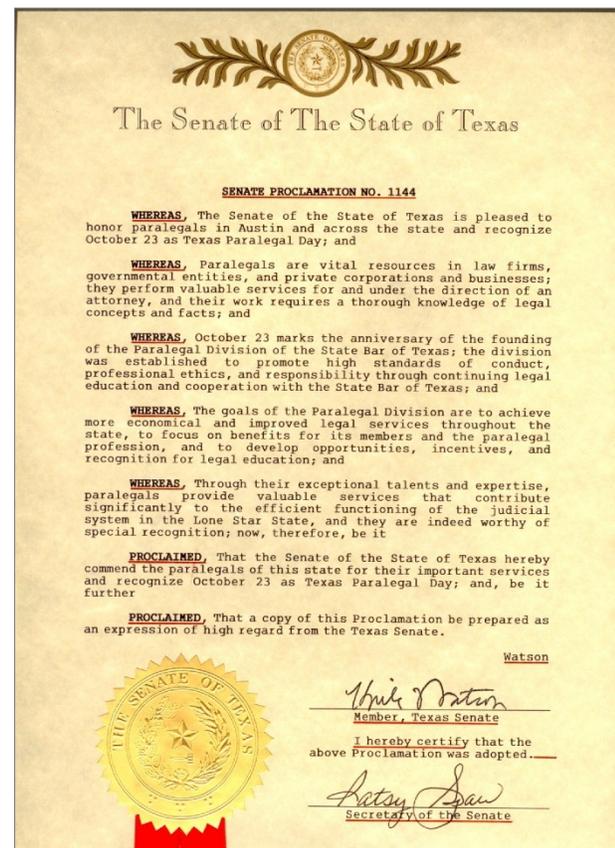
*CAPA Past President and Paralegal Division Immediate Past President*

The Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas was created on October 23, 1981. Texas was the FIRST state bar in the United States to create a separate division for paralegals. To commemorate this "first of its kind" formation, October 23<sup>rd</sup> was declared Texas Paralegal Day beginning in 1993 with the help of the Paralegal Division leadership and volunteers and various Texas House of Representatives and Senators. Similar resolutions were passed every couple of years until 2009 when October 23<sup>rd</sup> was made official as Texas Paralegal Day indefinitely with the help of Senator Kirk Watson and Senate Proclamation No. 1144.

We celebrate this day for all Texas paralegals. We owe our gratitude to the Paralegal Division for being a strong advocate for all Texas paralegals and we owe our gratitude to CAPA for begin an advocate for paralegals in Central Texas. Our professional associations work together to continue to advance and promote the paralegal profession. It is the reason Texas paralegals continue to remain at the forefront of the paralegal profession.

Thank you to all the volunteers who have tirelessly given their time and talents to grow this profession, set high standards through education and ethics, and promote voluntary certification. Thanks for your hard work and dedication to this profession. It is the reason why we are recognized every year on October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Happy Texas Paralegal Day!**



JOIN US FOR

## PARALEGAL DAY COCKTAIL HOUR



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23

6-8 P.M

THE DOGWOOD ROCK ROSE

11420 ROCK ROSE AVE #130



OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP  
MEETING & CLE LUNCHEON



OCTOBER CLE LUNCHEON

## WHAT IS ANIMAL LAW AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT IT

Kelley Dwyer

Law Office of Kelley J. Dwyer, PLLC

Wednesday, October 30, 2019

Chez Zee American Bistro

Register at: [www.CAPATX.com](http://www.CAPATX.com)

EARLY  
REGISTRATION

MEMBERS - \$27

NON-MEMBERS - \$30

LATE REGISTRATION  
(AFTER 10/25) - \$35

CLICK HERE TO  
REGISTER  
ONLINE

# HAPPY NATIONAL PRO BONO WEEK!

**October 20-26, 2019** is recognized by the American Bar Association and all affiliate associations as National Pro Bono Week. This is the 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the American Bar Association's National Celebration of Pro Bono. Every October since 2009, legal organizations across America participate in the ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service's (The Committee) National Celebration of Pro Bono. The Committee chose to launch the National Celebration of Pro Bono because of the increasing need for pro bono services during harsh economic times and the unprecedented response of attorneys and other legal professionals to meet this demand. Organizations are encouraged to plan and participate in events to recognize the work of pro bono legal professionals and to increase pro bono participation and expand legal services to low-income individuals and groups.

CELEBRATE  
PRO BONO  
2019

Every year the National Pro Bono Celebration organizers suggest a different type of legal need for volunteers to focus on during Pro Bono Week. In 2019, they encourage you to plan and participate in events focused on domestic violence. If you would like more information about the origin of National Pro Bono Week or the Pro Bono Texas organization feel free to visit <https://www.probono.net/celebrateprobono> or [probonotexas.org](http://probonotexas.org) for more information. And as always, if you are interested in volunteering for pro bono opportunities in the area or just getting more information about CAPA's pro bono efforts please visit the [Pro Bono tab](#) of the CAPA website or email [probono@capatx.org](mailto:probono@capatx.org).

## From the Pro Bono Committee...

As your Pro-Bono Committee Chairs, Amber and I wanted to take a moment to thank everyone for your support of not only our committee but all of our pro-bono efforts. In September, during our spotlight month, it was the perfect time for us to stop and reflect on how much we've accomplished year-to-date. As we looked back, it didn't take long to see that we couldn't have done anything without our eager volunteers, which are you. And as we move forward, we truly hope that we continue to see you volunteer at our pro-bono opportunities. We'll say that there are not enough words for us to describe the beauty that we notice as we observe legal clinics, KARNES trips, or CASA hearings, and see our CAPA volunteers engaged with the community and giving back. It makes us extremely proud of the role that we get to play in searching for and organizing these opportunities.

Looking at the upcoming months and the 2020 year, we know that we are a rather large organization and that there is always more that we could be doing and many different ways to give back. Therefore, we will be exploring new opportunities and sharing those with you as they present themselves. However, we would love to hear from you and know what kind of pro-bono opportunities you would be most interested in. You can contact us directly or better yet, join our Pro-Bono Committee which is public to all CAPA members and we meet on a monthly basis. Again, thank you for all of your support and we look forward to continuing to see you at our pro-bono events.

Sincerely,  
Amber Haney + Ana Badillo  
CAPA Pro Bono Committee Chairs

# TRAVIS COUNTY DISTRICT CLERK UPDATE

## Changes Impacting the Legal Community

By Velva L. Price, Travis County District Clerk

The Travis County District Clerk's Office has implemented changes that will benefit practitioners and members of the public.

### Key changes have included:

- Improved the jury duty experience for Travis County citizens by giving jurors the ability to ride mass transit free of charge;
- Implemented e-filing for criminal cases;
- Created clerk positions that specializes in appeals, transfers, severances and consolidations;
- Transferred microfilm documents to the electronic files;
- Added ability to obtain docket information for both civil and criminal cases;
- Used technology to improve customer service by making it easier for people to obtain information and make payments for court costs and fines outside of business hours;
- Expanded passport services by posting wait times on line and expanded public area which includes showing movies and children programming; and
- Accommodated Travis County growth by placing staff at the law library and Volunteer Legal Services Clinic.

### FUTURE PLANS

In the fall of 2020, the Travis County District and County Clerk will implement a new case management system, called Odyssey. This system will apply to both criminal and civil cases. Odyssey will increase the speed for the opening of files and inputting information. The case portal will combine all the courts cases – Justice of the Peace, County, District Courts. For example, you will be able to use one portal to obtain information about a case whether it is a Justice of the Peace or District case. This system change will be communicated to the legal community and public via e-mail, Travis County and District Clerk's website and local bar association outlets. By 2021, most of the counties in the Central Texas IH-35 corridor (Bell, Williamson, Hays, Travis and Bexar Counties) will be using the same system. Consequently, filers/users will input documents in generally the same way. After Odyssey has been installed, the District Clerk will implement on-line access to general litigation/government files for the public and encourage criminal cases to go paperless by working with the Courts, State and defense attorneys.

Thanks to everyone for your support of the District Clerk's Office. I look forward to continue to work with legal practitioners and the community and respond to your comments and suggestions.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: <https://www.traviscountytx.gov/district-clerk>

E-Mail address: [districtclerkhelp@traviscountytx.gov](mailto:districtclerkhelp@traviscountytx.gov)

Phone Number: (512) 854-9457



# PET OF THE MONTH



Tom & Goku

Goku is a siberian husky whose high energy leads him outdoors for long bike rides with his daddy. Tom is our sweet curious kitty who loves to cuddle with his brother and enjoy the flowers. They adore each other, and of course don't miss a chance to strike a pose for mama.

Submitted by Gina Calvino

CAPA Members! Submit a pet photo to [publications@capatx.org](mailto:publications@capatx.org). If your pet is featured, we'll send you some CAPA swag!



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# SPOTLIGHT SUSTAINING MEMBERS



Texas Board of Legal Specialization  
**BOARD CERTIFIED PARALEGAL**



MORE THAN  
**360**  
BOARD CERTIFIED  
PARALEGALS

**THE**  
**LEGAL CONNECTION**  
**INC.**

# Keepin' it Weird

HI, HOW ARE YOU



## FUN FACT

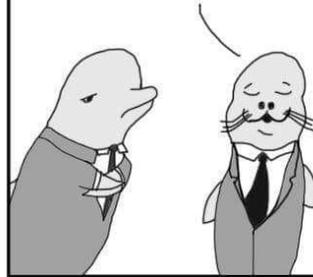
Jack-O-Lanterns were originally made out of turnips in Ireland. After Irish immigrants came to the U.S., bringing their Jack-O-Lantern custom with them, they switched to using pumpkins instead but only because here, turnips were too expensive!



October is National Pizza Month – everyone's got a favorite pizza (veggie on thin crust please)! According to [pizza.com](http://pizza.com), 94% of Americans eat pizza at least once a month! "The figures equal the consumption of about 45 slices of pizza per person in the U.S. each year and....350 slices per second." Wow! Austin is no slouch when it comes to amazing pizza places, each one unique in its own style. If you haven't checked out some of these city-wide favorites, I suggest you do so *rapido*: Homeslice, The Backspace, Via 311, Bufalina, Pinthouse Pizza, and Little Deli.



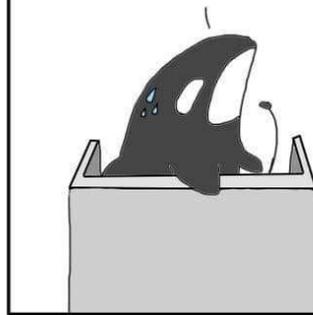
WOULD THE DEFENDANT TELL THE COURT EXACTLY...



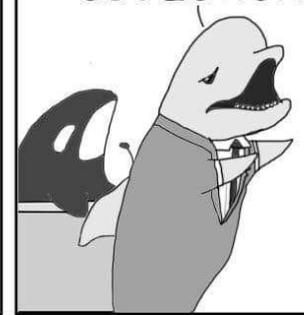
...WHAT KIND OF WHALE YOU ARE?



WELL, I'M...UH...



OBJECTION!



GOAT TO SELF @GOATTOSELF

October is weird enough with all the pumpkin spice, zombies, and Halloween-themed events! Here are some of the best (and somewhat unusual) events going on around Austin:

Austin Chronicle's "Best of Austin 2018" comic book creator Drew Edwards' "Halloween Man Comics" Costume Party

**October 19, 5:30 p.m. at Flamingo Cantina**

Halloween Ball & Aerial Cabaret

**October 26, 8:30 p.m. at The Belmont**

Austin Symphony Orchestra Presents: Halloween Children's Concert

**October 27, 3:00-4:00 p.m. at Long Center Dell Hall**

Barktober Fest - Halloween Dog Parade & Costume Contest

**October 27, 4:00-6:00 p.m. at City Of Bee Cave Central Park**

Halloween Week Zombie Walk & Flashmob

**October 29, 8:30-9:45 p.m. at Ballet Austin's Butler Center for Dance & Fitness (adults & ages 10+)**



Monthly Dose of  
**WEIRDNESS**

# MEMBER BENEFITS

EXCLUSIVELY FOR MEMBERS



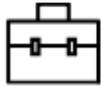
## CLE

CAPA offers several hours of CLE throughout the year at monthly luncheons, CLE Seminars, and Lunch & Learns. Many are complimentary or offered at a discounted rate.



## DISCUSSION FORUM

CAPA members have exclusive access to CAPA's online discussion forum. Ask questions, share information, and discuss all things paralegal.



## JOB BANK

Exclusively for Members, CAPA's Job Bank is updated several times per month with job postings in the Austin area.



## SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships can be used for paralegal certification exam fees, membership dues, CLE seminars, and other approved paralegal study materials.



## MENTOR PROGRAM

Ask for guidance from seasoned paralegals, or share your wisdom and experience with a student or new paralegal.



LEARN MORE AT [CAPATX.ORG](http://CAPATX.ORG)

THANK YOU FOR BEING A MEMBER OF  
CAPITAL AREA PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

AN AFFILIATE OF



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