

Message from the Chair

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by Danielle Price

I have a few membership and CLE updates to share and I have some information in follow up to Paralegal's Day, which was May 18th.

As many of you may already know, the Bar has added a new member benefit for attorneys which is a Lawyers Assistance Program that began in March of this year. The Paralegal Division is very pleased to announce that the Bar is also making this program available to members of the Paralegal Division. These services are offered through Blomquist Hale and will be available to Division members beginning September 1, 2006. Additional information about Blomquist Hale is available on their website at www.blomquisthale.com. The Paralegal Division will be mailing information on this program to all Division members at their home address in August.

Blomquist Hale offers services throughout the state and beginning September 1, 2006, "you and your family will have immediate access to trained counselors for face-to-face help with family problems, stress, depression, anxiety, personal cash management difficulties, elder care challenges, assessment of drug/alcohol dependence, and any other issues impairing your work or personal lives." This is just some of the information available on the Bar's website at <http://utahbar.org/members/blomquisthale.html>.

This added benefit for Division members is provided at a very reasonable cost. However, in order to offer this benefit, it is necessary to increase Division membership dues. The Board of Directors feel strongly that this is a valuable and tangible benefit for Division members and voted, without any opposition, for a dues increase of \$25. The Division has not increased dues for many years now and the Board has been very reluctant to do so on prior occasions, but this really is a worthy benefit for members making the dues increase an easy decision. The Board recognizes that for some members, this increase could be a burden and may affect their ability to renew membership. If this is the case for you, please contact Kathryn Shelton as soon as possible.

Membership renewals have been sent and are due June 30th. A late fee of \$25 is applicable for renewals postmarked after July 15, 2006. Please note that if you submitted your application for membership after March of this year, you will only need to remit \$25 for the dues increase to continue your membership for the 2006-

2007 year. All of the membership forms are available on the Division's website at <http://www.utahbar.org/sections/paralegals/Welcome.html>.

Also, note that the renewal documents include a volunteer form. There are many areas for involvement and the Board of Directors can definitely use your help in accomplishing all of the work that needs to be done throughout the year. Please consider getting involved.

As you know, the Division has been co-sponsoring with LAAU, monthly Brown Bag CLE in the Salt Lake area for the past couple of years. Jones Waldo graciously hosts these seminars on the 2nd Wednesday of the month and provides drinks. In addition, Ikon provides cookies for everyone. Over the past several months, the Division and LAAU have been working to provide Brown Bag seminars in the Ogden area. Due to the assistance of paralegal, Kenneth Raya with Smith Knowles in Ogden, the Division is pleased to announce the first Ogden CLE on June 21st. Brown Bags will be held each month in Ogden, on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, with the exception of July and possibly December. Seminars will alternate between Smith Knowles and VanCott Bagley in Ogden. Obviously, if you are in the area, your attendance would be appreciated. If you are interested in presenting or know of someone who may be, please contact Sharon Andersen at Sharon.andersen@slcgov.com. Likewise, if your firm is interested in hosting a Brown Bag, contact Sharon. Presenters receive 3 hours of CLE credit for their 1 hour CLE presentation. As a simple reminder, all Brown Bag seminars are free of charge, making it very easy to add up those CLE hours required for members of both LAAU and the Paralegal Division.

As for Paralegal's Day, this year's committee did an amazing job in planning the annual celebration luncheon. The event was at the Joseph Smith Memorial Building with just over 150 people in attendance. What a turn out! Ron Yengich presented an engaging and entertaining CLE program which garnered rave reviews. In addition to our regular program for the day, we added the presentation of the first annual Distinguished Paralegal of the Year award. This award was created by the Division in conjunction with LAAU with nominations accepted from attorneys and paralegals. The Nomination Selection Committee consisting of Judge David Nuffer, Katherine Fox, Charlotte Miller, Suzanne Potts (Paralegal Division representative), and Lorraine Wardle (LAAU representative), was charged with reviewing the nomination forms and selecting the award recipient. Lonnie Dawson, a paralegal with the Summit County Attorney's Office, was this year's recipient. Summit County Attorney, David Brickey, nominated Lonnie on behalf of the attorneys at his office. I had not met Lonnie prior to Paralegal's Day at the time of her award presentation, so I do not have personal knowledge of her accomplishments as a paralegal. Therefore, I refer to the information provided by Mr. Brickey who nominated Lonnie due to her "unparalleled professionalism and excellence." "Lonnie exhibits compassion, professionalism, and

tact in dealing with the various personalities that come through the door, and our office routinely receives compliments on the way Lonnie performs her duties." According to Mr. Brickey, all of the attorneys at his office use Lonnie as a model for their own work ethic and disposition. It is apparent from Mr. Brickey's nomination that Lonnie is an invaluable asset to his office and that she exemplifies the best qualities of a paralegal. The Division was pleased to present her with the first Distinguished Paralegal of the Year Award.

This award is intended to be an annual presentation, which means that you should expect to see nomination information circulated next Spring. This award is not restricted to members of either LAAU or the Paralegal Division. I am sure that we all know someone who should be nominated for this award, so be prepared!

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