

# MCPA TODAY

Official Publication of the Montgomery County Paralegal Association

Winter 2006

## President's Message

*You're happiest while you're making the greatest contribution.*

Robert F. Kennedy



**Season's Greetings!** The holidays are here – whether we're ready or not! We have the same amount of time to prepare each year, although somehow I really believe someone mysteriously plays some kind of game with the calendar. Before you know it I'm scrambling trying to balance work, family, shopping, cooking, cleaning, wrapping gifts – sound familiar?

With all that aside, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to our Board of Directors, the Committee Chairs, Committee Members and all of our 90+ members who have made 2006 a terrific year for MCPA. You are the most awesome group of people I have ever known! It has been both an honor and a privilege to work with all of you. Your tireless efforts, countless hours, loyalty and dedication are what make this organization a first class paralegal association, not to mention the fact that you are also the most giving and compassionate group of friends as well. We have collected cell phones, clothing, food, boxes of articles and calling cards for our overseas paralegals, six bags full of hats and mittens, again, for our ACLAMO and HeadStart little ones, monetary donations and the list goes on. **THANK YOU ALL!**

This year brought many terrific seminars and participation in numerous charitable events. MCPA's very own website is now up and running. When you get a chance, please take a look. You will find us at [www.montcoparalegals.org](http://www.montcoparalegals.org). It will be consistently updated so check back often! You'll find all of MCPA's upcoming events, information on what's going on in the paralegal world, our charities and how you can help and much, much more.

In closing, please remember in your thoughts and prayers our soldiers both home and abroad. These men and women and their families have given so much of themselves so that you and I are able to freely enjoy not only our holidays but freedom each and every day.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of MCPA we wish you and your families a wonderful holiday season filled with love, happiness, peace and joy. I look forward to seeing you all at our January 2007 dinner meeting! Have a happy and healthy New Year!

## Board of Directors *Officers*

**Beth Ann Breckenridge**  
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**Kathleen Zamorski**  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

**Lisa Lapenna**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice  
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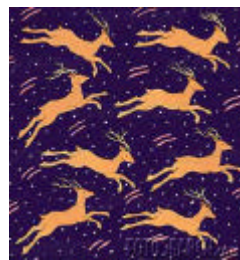
**Mary Hoskinson**  
Secretary

**Tracey L. Barnes, RP**  
Treasurer

**Harry Reichner**  
**Karen Garcia**  
**Stephanie Dise**  
**Matthew Fine**

## New Members

Nancy McConnell  
Carole Rossi



MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION



## Election Time

*The Ballots Are In*

By Tracey L. Barnes, LP

On Thursday, November 9, 2006, the MCPA held its annual General Membership Election Meeting at the Brookside Restaurant in Mainland, Pennsylvania.

Beth Breckenridge began the meeting with a brief introduction of the Board Members and an overview regarding the activities of the MCPA over the year and future plans. Lisa LaPenna enlightened the group regarding the ACLAMO School and the services it provides to the community. The MCPA will be collecting hats, mittens, and scarves at its Holiday Social to be donated to ACLAMO and the Montgomery County Head Start — don't forget your donations!!

Following Lisa's presentation, each Committee Chair or member of a committee spoke regarding the activities of his/her committee and future plans for each committee. Of note, Johanna Yemm gave an informative presentation regarding the Mentoring Project that she and Lisa LaPenna have developed. Also, Kathy Zamorski from the Planning Committee reminded members of the upcoming Holiday Social and to mark calendars regarding the first meeting of January which will have speaker(s) on stress management and nutrition. Another activity that was mentioned during the Committee Reports was the development of a MCPA Website to be implemented by the end of 2006!!

Following a delicious dinner the ballots were counted that the MCPA is proud to welcome our returning Board Members:

Beth A. Breckenridge  
Lisa LaPenna  
Mary Hoskinson  
Stephanie Dise

During the evening door prizes were awarded to 2 lucky members and plenty of camaraderie was had by all.

Thank you to all who attended the meeting and donated items for Manna on Main Street.

## Paralegal Regulation

*An Upcoming Series of Articles  
in MCPA Today*

By Karen Garcia



How much do you know and/or understand about the controversial issue of regulating paralegals? Will regulation become a reality in Pennsylvania sooner rather than later? What are the implications of regulating paralegals? Will it be good for our profession? How will it affect the individual practicing paralegal? Does our state and local bar associations support the idea of regulation?

These are just some of the questions I'll be addressing in upcoming 2007 MCPA Newsletter issues. Stay tuned



**MCPA** participated for the first time in the Light The Night Walk which was held on Oct. 21, 2006. The walk is an annual event which supports The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. The evening walk took place on the beautiful campus of Gwynedd-Mercy College.

O'Brien & Ryan, LLP (Mary Hoskinson's employer), was one of the corporate sponsors of the walk, and Daniel F. Ryan, III, Esquire was the Corporate Chairman of the 2006 Montgomery County Light the Night Walk. O'Brien & Ryan walked in memory of their colleague, Alan W. Focht, who died last year of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma at the age of 44. O'Brien & Ryan raised \$17,007.10 for the event.

Participants carried either red (supporters) or white (survivors) balloons. The balloons lit up the evening skies and the sight was spectacular. It was a heart warming evening for a worthy cause.

MCPA raised \$305.00 through pledges. The Montgomery County Walk is projected to raise \$215,000.00. The Eastern Chapter of Pennsylvania exceed their anticipated goal by raising \$1.2 million, which will be used for extensive research in curing leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma

We thank all of our members who participated in The Light the Night Walk and for those who generously supported The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. We look forward to next year's event.

On November 3, 2006, MCPA participated in the Special Olympics Fall Festival which was held at the Villanova University campus. This is the largest annual student run Special Olympics event held in the U.S., and over 2,000 volunteers were on hand.

This was the third year our association volunteered to cheer, applaud and support the athletes. The fall afternoon was brilliant but shadowed in comparison to the smiles of the competing athletes. The true spirit of teamwork was the impetus of the individuals who participated in soccer, volleyball, bocce ball and track. The energy, motivation and strong will of the athletes were inspirational. "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt." The Special Olympics Athlete Oath is the true spirit of the athletes and also is something we could all aspire to.

**Joyce J. O'Brien**

Chair, Community Outreach Committee

# HOLIDAY SOCIAL

*Fun, Friends, Gloves, Mittens and Trees, oh my . . .*

By: **Lisa M. LaPenna**



On December 7, 2006, the members of MCPA kicked off the holiday season at LaBella Cucina in Centre Square for a night of friendship and camaraderie. There was good food, drinks, and lots of laughter. Our MCPA tree was toppling over with colorful mittens, hats, and scarves to keep our little friends at ACLAMO and Friends School warm.

I would like to thank everyone who took the time out of their busy schedule to attend our holiday social and to those members who contributed toward our MCPA tree.

Hope to see you again in 2007!



# Report of Region Meeting Held on November 11, 2006

By: **Charlene Healy, RP**

Our Fall Region meeting was hosted by the Central Pennsylvania Paralegal Association in Harrisburg, PA. They did a great job on the organization of the meeting space and food and on the Saturday night dinner.

We had quite a few new faces at the Region meeting, which is always nice to see. The meeting started with introductions of all in attendance, including 2 additional representatives from the CPPA Board.

We reviewed the financial reports contained on the website; discussed the need to submit the proper membership forms with dues; Reporter themes and the need for authors; the various committees and those seeking representatives from Region IV; and the issues outlined below.



**Bob Hrouda**

Region Director, **Bob Hrouda**, read to the Region the reports given to him regarding PACE, the Management Company, and an update on the Financials.

#### Website:

Discussions regarding the website were held. Bob reaffirmed the need to get newsletters to NFPA headquarters. The website has been completely revamped and as always,

it is a work in progress. I am always interested in your comments or suggestions to pass along to the management company to help improve the site.

#### Leadership/Conferences/Merger:

With regard to the Leadership conference and other conferences, Region IV wants to leave them as they are, alternating the locations around the country. There was some concern with having 2 of the first 3 in the south (Texas and Atlanta). With regard to individuals leaving the conferences before they are completed, all said that we should track the attendance and make it known to the local Boards/President if people are not attending the full conference. ALL NFPA members are welcome at these conferences. If you are ever interested in attending, contact an MCPA Board Member or myself for dates and locations.

#### Future Board Meetings:

The delegates of Region IV were okay with the board selecting one location for future Board meetings.

#### CLE:

The overwhelming opinion of the Region is that they felt \$50.00 per credit hour for online CLE was too high and most said they would not take an online course for this price.

Bob Hrouda was asked to inquire as to whether or not the Online CLE will accommodate “state specific” CLEs?

#### PACE:

Region IV is not in favor of going forward with a new entry level test, as is one of the potential recommendations from the Tier II Ad Hoc Committee. They feel that the problem could lie in the fact that PACE has not been marketed properly, and therefore suggest that if NFPA is considering putting money towards a new test, that it would be better spent hiring a professional marketing firm to market the PACE exam we already have in place.

#### Marketing Committee:

We discussed the need for committee members of all committees. There was one volunteer for the Marketing Committee, Sheri-Su Breski of Central PA. Bob Hrouda may have one for the Legislative Committee. Please let me know if you are interested on serving on this Committee or any other NFPA committee!

#### Conference Video:

Our last Annual Conference in Chicago was filmed to create a video so those members that are interested in seeing what goes on at the convention can view the Video and see what goes on at the meeting. One delegate from our Region is looking into a family member, who is in this profession, to see if they can do the editing of the conference video. Bob will report back to us once he hears from the delegate.

The meeting then turned to Association specific issues. Great discussions were held on many topics and some really good ideas arose from these discussions. Items discussed included member retention, obtaining vendor support for various events, increasing non-dues income and ways associations are encouraging members and former board members (Board member burnout) to be active in their board and committees. Many ideas from various associations were brought to the table.

#### New Member Letter:

An idea arose regarding a “form” NFPA letter to be available for new local members. A “welcome to NFPA” form letter signed by the Director of Membership and/or President could be in PDF form on our website and available for local associations to put into their new member packages. The letter would give information such as the website and password for the member’s only page, briefly discuss the benefits of belonging to NFPA and any other info you want to put on it. The entire Region endorsed this idea.

#### Regulation/Education Meeting – Philadelphia:

An informal, information gathering meeting was held in Philadelphia, PA., regarding education and the potential regulation of paralegals. It was attended by many local colleges, the Philadelphia Association of Paralegals, a representative from the Pennsylvania Disciplinary Board, IPMA and Bob Hrouda. Bob stated he was unclear whether his invite was as Region Director, past President of Philadelphia or his role as Primary Delegate to the Keystone Alliance.

## Report of Region Meeting Held on November 11, 2006 *continued*

The outcome of the meeting was to plan future meetings, which will include invites to all the delegations in PA as well as the chair of the Keystone Alliance. At our Region Meeting, a Pennsylvania delegate stated she wanted Bob to attend future meetings as Region IV Director and all Pennsylvania Associations in attendance agreed, but were taking it back to their Boards. So far, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh's Boards voted in favor, I am currently awaiting our Board's decision. Bob understands that he is only allowed to come into PA as a Region Director if a majority vote is in the affirmative.

Our next Region Meeting will be hosted by the South Jersey Paralegal Association.

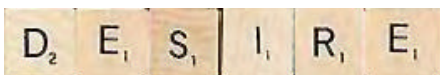
## The Three D's

By: **Mary J. McKay, RP, CLA**  
Region III



How do you really succeed in this paralegal profession? I heard somewhere about the "three D's:" Desire, Discipline, and Determination. These are the elements in our character that tell us to get up, dust ourselves off, and keep running. They say that the only difference between the quitter and the champion is that the champion possesses determination to get up one more time. And, how many times have you done that? Probably more than you can remember.

Desire, discipline and determination are key ingredients to our success. If we have no desire to move ahead, we never will



Desire is the first spark of the bonfire of passion. Once our desire is alive, it takes a great deal of discipline so the fire does not go out. Adverse conditions can dampen and snuff out our desire, but with discipline the fire will continue. Some of these hindrances include stress, failure to plan and prioritize, and even office jealousies. With discipline, though, we can manage our stress, we can regroup and reprioritize, and we can keep ourselves out of the office gossip (a real energy zapper). There will always be people who think they can do things better than you, and the truth be known, maybe they can. But, for whatever reason, they haven't, but you have.

Self-discipline is probably one of the reasons. It is a sure way to maintain your focus and "keep the main thing the main thing." It's much like a runner who must control her diet to get necessary nutrients. She must rise early in the morning to exercise and she must spend time running to increase her endurance.

Self-discipline builds our endurance; it serves as a way to "fan the fire."

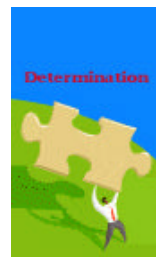


"Discipline" can mean staying an hour after the other office lights have been turned off. It can mean proofreading your work after the kids are tucked in bed. We've all done it. And when you're

doing it, you aren't really thinking about how great it's going to feel when your team wins the case. At that moment, you're thinking about how nice it would be to have a 9 to 5 job. But, still, you do it.

You do it because you aren't a quitter; you are a winner.

Determination comes into play here, too. Webster's dictionary defines "determination" as "the act of deciding definitely and firmly." And that's how we succeed at almost anything.



We decide.

We each have that "something within" us that toward our goal. That "something within" isn't else. No one can make the decision for us and once we have made our decision to win, no one can stop us! You have the power to decide! That doesn't mean reaching the goal will be easy; it just means that once you have decided "definitely and firmly" (as Mr. Webster says), then you will not give up easily. So, let's decide that we will succeed. Let's decide that we will be the best paralegals we can be.

And let's decide that nothing can stop us from reaching our goal.

## How to Contact Us

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# MCPA Annual Picnic

*Food, food, and more food.*

By: **Harry A. Reichner**



On Saturday October 21st, the MCPA held its annual picnic at Mondauk Common in Upper Dublin Township. The weather was brisk at first, but the bright sun and activities soon warmed us up. The food and company were outstanding! As usual, there was a lot of food - an array of appetizers and snacks, hamburgers, hotdogs, a fanfare of picnic foods, and luscious desserts. In addition, there were Halloween arts and crafts for the kids and a game of bocce for the adults. Oh, and let's not forget the dessert contest! Debbie Arbuckle took first prize with her indescribably delicious pumpkin cheesecake. I understand she will not divulge the recipe even under pain of death. Irene Greenleaf received second prize for her tantalizing lemon blueberry cake.

A BIG thank you to the following supporters: Brian Ewing at Commerce Bank for the donation of gifts; Catherine LaPenna for the pumpkins used for arts and crafts; Café Rende, Mary Malantonio and Nina Lowe for dessert contest gifts; and especially Sandy Schwoyer for the donation of food. We really had a good time.

I would finally like to thank all who participated in the MCPA's picnic and activities. To ensure the success of our association, it is important that all of us are active in our events. We missed seeing you at the picnic if you were unable to attend!

Here's wishing you and yours a happy and healthy holiday season!





**RE: 2007 Montgomery County Paralegal Association Membership Drive**

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your membership and interest in MCPA during 2006. This marks the end of another exciting year for the MCPA in its continued success benefiting paralegals working or living in Montgomery County.

Our membership continues to be strong and steady. We currently have 90 members who work in law firms, corporations, banks, life insurance companies, our local courthouses, non-profit organizations, as well as freelance. We are also pleased to have welcomed several new student and supporting members into our Association.

During the last year, MCPA maintained our membership with the Keystone Alliance, which consists of Pennsylvania paralegal associations whose representatives meet throughout the year working to directly benefit paralegals working in Pennsylvania. The MCPA also offered several seminars covering such topics as condemnation, estate planning, and financial planning. At the end of 2006, with great excitement the MCPA announced the creation of the MCPA website — [www.montcoparalegals.org](http://www.montcoparalegals.org). Don't forget to check the website regularly to get the most up-to-date information regarding the Association and the paralegal profession.

It is once again time for annual membership drive. For 2007, the dues will remain at \$70 for Voting Members, \$55 for Associate Members, \$25 for Student members. MCPA annual dues include the yearly membership dues to the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc.

If you are currently a Voting, Associate or Student and wish to renew in these classifications, please complete the short form attached with this letter. If you wish to change membership categories, please complete the Application for Membership found at our association's web page at [www.montcoparalegals.org](http://www.montcoparalegals.org)

I encourage you to renew your membership as 2007 promises to be an amazing year. Many new seminars are already planned for 2007 beginning with a stress management seminar in January.

Please return your completed form along with a check made payable to "MCPA" to the address listed on the bottom of page 1. Please return our renewal form by January 31, 2007 to ensure that you remain on our mailing and email lists.

New Members are always welcome, so please feel free to copy and share this mailing with your colleagues and friends who are not currently members of MCPA. Applications for new members can be found at our association's webpage at [www.montcoparalegals.org](http://www.montcoparalegals.org).

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the MCPA, I would like to wish you a happy holiday season and a wonderful new year!

MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

BY:



Tracey L. Barnes, RP  
Membership Committee

**MCPA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

I would like to renew my membership for 2007 as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_ Voting Member (\$70.00) \_\_\_\_\_ Associate Member (\$55.00)  
*Full benefits, voting privileges* *No voting privileges*

\_\_\_\_\_ Student Member (\$25.00)  
*Full benefits, no voting privileges*

If you have moved, changed phone numbers, have a new e-mail address or changed jobs, please let us know so we can update your records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you are interested in joining or gathering further information on any of MCPA's Committees, please circle any of the following and the Committee Chair will contact you to discuss. In particular, the Planning, Marketing and Community Outreach Committees greatly need your assistance.

*Membership*   *Planning*   *Fundraising*   *Newsletter*   *Marketing*   *Community Outreach*

Please give us your comments and suggestions so that we can work towards making 2007 another great year.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

— Check here if you do **not** want your contact information available to other vendors and/or companies besides the Montgomery County Paralegal Association and the National Federation of Paralegal Associations.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Current email address at work: \_\_\_\_\_

Current email address at home: \_\_\_\_\_



## THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

<b><i>When:</i></b>	January 24, 2007 6:00 P.M.
<b><i>Where:</i></b>	Village Caterers 969 Bethlehem Pike (Route 309) Montgomeryville, Pennsylvania
<b><i>Special Guest:</i></b>	<b><i>Guest Speaker to speak on stress management and nutrition</i></b>
<b><i>Menu:</i></b>	Choice of Chicken Florentine or Penne Pasta with Ratatouille Sauce Meal includes vegetable medley, roasted potato, dinner rolls, coffee and tea, and cheese cake for dessert
<b><i>Cost:</i></b>	\$21 for members and non-members
<b><i>RSVP:</i></b>	By Monday, January 15, 2007 To Tracey L. Barnes, RP, at <a href="mailto:Traceyb@dbyd.com">Traceyb@dbyd.com</a>

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW AND LET US KNOW THAT  
WE WILL SEE YOU ON THE 24TH!!**

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## Montgomery County Paralegal Association

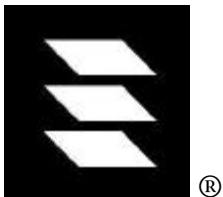
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<b>PHILADELPHIA, PA</b>	215-864-2700	Fax 215-864-2709
<b>PRINCETON, NJ</b>	609-919-6360	Fax 800-200-4414

# STILL AVAILABLE! A Great Post-Holiday Gift!

MCPA Long Sleeved T-Shirts and Golf Shirts are still available for purchase. Contact Kathy Zamorski if you are interested.

[\(kmz@eastburngray.com\)](mailto:kmz@eastburngray.com)

The cost is \$10 for the long sleeve and \$20 for the golf shirts. They make a great Christmas present!



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