

May / June 2011



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Austin LPA, Inc.
c/o Alexis Montgomery
The Verdict! Editor

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The Verdict!

AUSTIN LEGAL PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Vice President's Message

By Trudy Rush

A New Style of Leadership!

This year you will notice a slightly different approach for Austin LPA. As you are probably aware, we do not have a president nor a president-elect this year. This is very unusual and we believe it is the first time in 50 years of Austin LPA existence. The president, or co-presidents, as we have had in prior years, has a number of leadership roles. Some of those leadership roles include presiding over business meetings, the Lunch and Learn meetings, and preparation of articles for our publication The Verdict! There is also the occasional hounding of chairman for their consent agenda reports which come out prior to each business meeting. As you can see, this is sometimes quite a bit of work each month. We all know that family and our jobs take first priority (as well it should), and sometimes juggling our lives and remembering to take time for ourselves is difficult. This year many of our members did not feel they had the time to devote to this office and consequently no one accepted the office of president or president-elect.

However, the officers who were elected decided that there was no reason that Austin LPA should not continue to have a very viable and healthy organization for you. We want to continue providing great continuing legal education, continue with our scholarship program for students wishing to further their education to become a legal support professional, continue with our certification programs, and continue with our community service involvement. We hope that you want that as well!

So, this year, we are trying something different. Over the coming months, you will see our team of officers handling "presidential" responsibilities throughout the year. They will write articles for The Verdict!; they will preside over the Lunch and Learn meetings; and they will preside over the business meetings. We are sure chapters throughout the state will be watching Austin to see how our year progresses. We want to make sure that we are successful in this new style of leadership and hope that you will help us achieve this goal. Perhaps you might decide to run for office next year while seeing all the support the fellow officers and chairmen provide!

In addition to our regular programs, this year we hope to provide a "leadership boot camp" for members. The ability to influence others to accomplish desired goals is innate in some people and lacking in others. Leadership is not exclusive to running an association. Leadership skills are the vehicle through which you employ resources to realize a particular outcome. The ability to make complicated decisions, communicate clearly, and delegate responsibly are skills that can be learned and improved. Who doesn't want or need that? Stay tuned for Austin LPA's Leadership Boot Camp. We are proud that this boot camp will be partially funded by a grant received from the NALS Foundation.

As always, all of the officers our here for you and are always open to new ideas and suggestions. Please let us hear from you. Finally, please have a safe and restful summer!

YOUR SUMMER VACATION

Will it be fun or boring, expensive or inexpensive, a disaster or the best vacation ever? Check out some of the following inexpensive ideas for you and your kids.

- ✓ **Hiking.** Hiking is a popular activity but sometimes dangerous. It can also be great exercise and burn lots of calories. Most importantly, it's loads of fun and can be a great way to spend some quality time with family. Go with a buddy so both of you are with someone in the time of need. Find local hiking trails by visiting www.localhikes.com/MSA/MSA_0640.asp to find the best hiking spots. If you know that the hiking hills are difficult to come down, take a hiking stick with you.
- ✓ **Crafts.** Check out some good arts and crafts book from the local library. Buy the supplies needed and make some of the crafts. You children can also sell the finished products in your front lawn and make some extra money to spend!
- ✓ **Computer games!** If it is raining and your kids are complaining, go to the computer. There are some great online games which are safe for everyone. Check out www.games.com. If your children are younger than 11 years old, be sure to check out any websites you aren't sure of. You can go to www.common sense.org to get the latest scoop on websites, etc.
- ✓ **Traveling!** Lucky you! Research ahead of time on the area to which you are traveling. For example, if you are going to Disney World, have an itinerary of the attractions that will be of interest to your family. Check out www.vrbo.com for house rentals. Or www.gasbuddy.com for the best gas deals on the road.
- ✓ **Library or bookstore.** Go to your local library or bookstore and buy a new book series. Reading is a great activity for summer and it will help your children brush up on skills needed for the upcoming school year.
- ✓ **Staying Cool.** Aah, ice cream...the snack of the summer! Google ice cream recipe and you can learn how to make homemade ice cream. It'll be much more fun. Go out with family and friends to an ice cream restaurant and make an outing of it. Or, visit the local pools for the afternoon. Just remember your sunscreen.
- ✓ **Movies.** Go to the movies with friends and family! In the mood for chick flicks with your girlfriends? Ready to laugh it up with pals? Remember the matinees are always the least expensive.
- ✓ **Try gardening!** Dedicate your time to a garden, full of beautiful flowers and tasty vegetables and fruits! Use your creativity and develop a green thumb. Don't have time for a garden? Care for a cactus! They're cheap and cute, but watch out for those spines.
- ✓ **Learn a new language.** Go to the library and borrow books on different languages, such as French, Spanish, or sign language. Habla Espanol?
- ✓ **Miscellaneous ideas.** Go back-to-school shopping early and snag some deals! Get your children involved in a youth group, 4-H or scouts.

SAFE TRAVEL TIPS DURING YOUR SUMMER VACATION

Safety At Home

First of all, give yourself less to think about by taking care of safety and security at home. Get someone you trust to look after your house keys. Give them your emergency information and ask them to swing by your home every so often to make sure that everything is okay. Put delivery of mail and publications on hold and use timers to program your lights, TV, and radio to give the illusion that your home is occupied. Let your neighbors know that you will be gone so that if they see someone in your home who shouldn't be there they will alert the police.

En Route

Security is also paramount when on your way to your destination. Make sure that you don't have identifying information showing on your luggage. Avoid telling strangers exactly where you're coming from, or where you're going and for how long. If you happen to reveal these details to the wrong person, you give them a window of opportunity to burgle your home and be long gone before anyone notices.

At Your Destination

One of the key things when you arrive is to avoid looking like a stranger. That means avoiding asking for directions and making it obvious that you're out of your depth. Unscrupulous people can take advantage of this. Do your own research to find out where you should go and where you should avoid. Keep maps and guidebooks out of sight and only consult them in public areas. If you are travelling with other members of your family, divide up cash and credit cards among yourselves, so if something happens to one person you don't lose everything. When staying in a hotel, get a safe so that you can take with you only what you need.

General Travel Safety Tips

When on vacation people are generally more relaxed and let their guard down. It's great to have a good time but this is a time to be more aware of who and what is around you. Avoid flashing costly electronic items, jewelry, or cash as these attract attention from thieves. Keep wallets out of sight and purses close to the body.

FOOD SAFETY

Proper Equipment -- It is important to have the appropriate equipment when planning an outside event.

- Food Thermometer
- Hand Sanitizer, Hand Soap, Water and Paper Towels
- Sanitizer Spray or Wipes
- Insulated Containers- *i.e.* Ice Chest or Insulated Bags
- Cooking Utensils for each type of Meat item
- Serving Utensils for each item

Know Food Safety Temperatures -- check food temperature properly, thermometer should be in product for a minimum of 15 seconds:

- Poultry- 165 Degrees F
- Ground Beef- 155 Degrees F
- Seafood- 145 Degrees F
- Steaks/Chops- 145 Degrees F
- Commercially Processed Ready to Eat Food- 135 Degrees F
- Roast (Pork, Beef, Veal, and Lamb): 145 Degrees F for 4 minutes.
- Cold Food needs to be kept at 41 Degrees F or Lower *very important in this Texas heat!

Wash your Hands -- Prior to cooking and in between each task. You must wash your hands for a minimum of 20 seconds. Sing Happy Birthday to yourself and that should be 20 seconds.

Do Not Cross Contaminate -- Use separate containers and utensils when cooking different meats or going from one task to another.

(Provided by Dagar's Catering – Austin LPA's Lunch and Learn Vendor)

Following these tips doesn't mean you can't have a good time when on vacation.
In fact, if you make these part of your travel routine,
you will have an even better time as it will reduce any worry.

More Opportunities for Knowledge

LOCAL CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION:

June 14 Austin LPA Lunch and Learn
Austin Bar Association, 816 Congress Avenue, 7th Floor, 12:00 p.m.

July 12 Austin LPA Lunch and Learn
Austin Bar Association, 816 Congress Avenue, 7th Floor, 12:00 p.m.

STATE AND NATIONAL CONFERENCES:

September 30- October 1 *Texas ALP Fall Educational Conference,*
Holiday Inn Express, Waco, Texas
(Early Bird Registration Deadline is August 31, 2011) www.texasalp.org

October 13-16 *NALS Professional Development & Education Conference*
Hyatt Regency Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio
(Early Bird Registration Deadline July 1, 2011) www.nals.org

NALS ONLINE LEARNING CENTER:

June 8 UCC Searching and Filing: Ask the Experts
8:00 pm CST; www.nals.org

June 22 Managing Documents (Litigation/Civil Law)
8:00 p.m. CST; www.nals.org

LEGAL CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Hello Austin LPA!

The flowers are blooming, the weather is warm and our Legal Career Opportunities page is flowing with several new job listings. These listings provide great opportunities and wonderful environments. If you



would like to post a job opening or if you are considering changing employers, please contact me and I can provide you with the contact information. One of the great benefits of being an Austin LPA member is our local career opportunity listings. They are for the benefit of NALS, Texas ALP, and Austin LPA members only. To see our current listings, please refer to our website at <http://www.austinlpa.org> and go to our Members Login. Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Mary Bernal / mbernal@lglaw.com

Are You A Good Leader?

In order to do a good job, any leader must be able to guide, motivate, and help his or her members.

Guidance: A leader guides people by providing an example of how things should be done. To guide effectively, a leader should be working alongside the members, in the trenches so to speak. The leader is not necessarily doing the same work but is working alongside them.

A leader doesn't just tell someone to do something; that's what a boss does. Leaders demonstrate what they want their people to do. Keep in mind the old adage that actions speak louder than words.

Motivation: A quality leader motivates others. There are many ways to motivate, but a common thread among great leaders is to listen to what their people have to say and respect them and the job they do. As a leader, your team members are important.

Look inside yourself and think about what motivates you – a bonus, extra time off? Those are nice, but actually the biggest motivator is recognition and a big pat on the back for a job well done.

Help: Good leaders provide help to their team members to do their job. What do your members need from you to get their job done quickly and efficiently? What tools can you provide them with to help them do their job better? If you are not sure what help your members need, simply ask them what they need. Help can be provided in the form of additional training or by coaching and feedback that improves performance.

So, are you a good leader? Most people in leadership positions must learn how to be good leaders. If you focus on guiding, helping, and motivating others, you will be well on your way to becoming a leader anyone would be proud to follow.

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VENDOR THANK YOU!

Austin LPA appreciates *all* of its corporate sponsors and the support they provide our Association. There are times when our corporate sponsors go beyond expectations and we would like to give those sponsors extra kudos.

In this edition, we would like to spotlight *U.S. Legal Support, Inc.* and *Courtney Longcope* for their generous support. *Thank you* Courtney and U.S. Legal Support for your sponsorship of Austin LPA! U.S. Legal Support is one of the leading providers of litigation services throughout the country and Courtney is there to assist with your court reporting, record retrieval, and litigation services. Go to our Corporate Sponsors page at the end of The Verdict! for Courtney's contact information.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!



Marlena Johnson – May 3
Trudy Rush – May 12
Scotti Beam – May 27

Cindy Buzan – June 4
Michelle Friend – June 5
Patricia Nuhn – June 13
Karen Mallos – June 24

COMMUNITY NEWS PAGE

Attention Western District of Texas Electronic Filers (U.S. District Court)

An update has been made to the electronic case filing document entitled **Administrative Policies and Procedures for Electronic Filing in Civil and Criminal Cases**. The major changes to the document are highlighted below.

The updated "Electronic Filing Procedures" document can be found at the following link:
<http://www.txwd.uscourts.gov/ecf/docs/efileprocd.pdf>

Effective June 2, 2011

- A. The complaint and other documents typically submitted at the time a social security case is initiated in Federal Court may be filed either electronically or in the traditional manner.
- B. Social security transcripts of administrative hearings may be filed either electronically or in the traditional manner
- C. A notice of appeal shall be filed electronically.
- D. The following waivers may be filed electronically:
 - 1. Waiver of arraignment
 - 2. Waiver of preliminary examination
 - 3. Waiver of detention hearing
 - 4. Waiver of preliminary revocation hearing

The above includes the highlights to the changes that have recently been made. It is imperative that all e-filers read the "Electronic Filing Procedures" in their entirety in order to be fully aware of the e-filing requirements of the Western District of Texas.

If you have a posting for the Community News Page, please contact me at
alexismontgomery@austin.rr.com.

Please remember, it is important that good communication occurs throughout our Chapter for our members to be aware of what is occurring in our profession and what events are coming up.

Teambuilding Lessons We Can Learn from Geese

Author Unknown

Fact #1 – As each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird following. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71 percent greater flying range than if one bird flew alone.

Lesson Learned – People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the strength of one another.



Fact #2 – Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front.

Lesson Learned – If we have as much sense as geese, we will stay in formation with those who are ahead of where we want to go and be willing to accept their help as well as give ours to others.

Fact #3 – When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies at the point position.

Lesson Learned – It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership.

Fact #4 – The geese in formation honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson Learned – We need to make sure our honking from behind is encouraging, and not something else.

Fact #5 – When a goose gets sick or wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it is able to fly again, or dies. Then they launch out on their own, with another formation, or they catch up with their flock.

Lesson Learned – If we have as much sense as geese do, we too, will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

*Reprinted with Permission
Teambuildinginc.com*

2011-2012 Leadership Roster

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