Whether you think you can or think you can't—you are right.

Henry Ford
Happy 2020! Can you believe we are starting a new decade? I want to thank you for renewing your membership this year. AAPi has been hard at work planning and doing our very best to make sure you are included and informed about what AAPi is doing.

What are your GOALS this year when it comes to your profession? AAPi would like to help you with reaching those goals.

If becoming certified is one of your goals, please plan on attending our CP Knowledge Portion of the Review Course scheduled for February 8th in Birmingham at Freedom/Veritext. This is a great way to start or further assist you in your preparation for taking the CP exam and reaching that goal. We do plan on offering the Skills portion later in the year.

Have you been considering changing areas of law or wanting to become more skilled or advanced in your own area of practice? Our Summer Seminar Committee can help you achieve this goal. Our seminar committee is hard at work planning for our Summer Convention which is scheduled for August 20th – August 23rd, 2020 at the Hampton Inn and Suites in Orange Beach, Alabama. Please plan to join us. There is something for everyone at the Convention. You won’t be disappointed.

If one of your goals is getting more involved with AAPi, we would love for you to join a committee or be on the Board. Whether you are just joining the paralegal profession or are a seasoned paralegal, we need you!

AAPi wants you to know that you are more than just a member to us. We care about you and strive to help you be the best paralegal you can be. We want to assist you in reaching your career goals. Getting involved in AAPi is the best way to start. Please reach out to me or any of the other Board Members if we can do anything to help you with meeting your goals. Let AAPi help you in 2020 be the best paralegal you can be.

Angela

A goal without a plan is just a wish.
Thank you for the opportunity to serve AAPi as Region 1 director.

Since September 2019, Region I has had 4 region meetings with CLE provided. September was "Billing 101," October was "Shared Parenting in Child Custody," November was "A Centennial Celebration of Women's Suffrage," and January was "An Introduction to Immigration Law." We had approximately 35-40 attendees for most of these meetings.

In November, we hosted a Sub-regional meeting in Tuscaloosa in an effort to involve the paralegal community there. Veritext sponsored the lunch, and Adrienne Berry and Angela Henderson represented AAPi. There were 5 attendees in addition to our sponsor and representatives. We are hoping to do another Sub-regional in the spring.

If you know of someone in Region I who may be interested in attending our monthly luncheons and/or would like more information about AAPi and our regional events, please have them contact me at slriley@csattorneys.com.

Sheryl

On October 10th and 11th, 2019, several members of Region 1 volunteered their time and assisted in Wills for Seniors Clinic hosted by Samford University and the Birmingham Volunteer Lawyer Program. We helped notarize the wills and assisted with other general questions and information. It was a great way that paralegals could help our Seniors in the community make sure that they had the proper documents in place at a very crucial time in their lives.
Region II is comprised of the following counties: Autauga, Barbour, Bullock, Butler, Chambers, Chilton, Coffee, Coosa, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Dallas, Elmore, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery, Perry, Pike, Russell, Tallapoosa.

Region II held a luncheon on November 7, 2019 at LilliMaggs Restaurant in Ozark, AL with the Honorable Henry “Sonny” Reagan as the speaker. Judge Reagan spoke on “What Judges Expect from Paralegals.” This luncheon met the requirements of the NALA Certifying Board for continuing legal education credit required to maintain the CP (Certified Paralegal) credential. I would like to express much thanks to those individuals helped pull this meeting together and those who were in attendance for the meeting. I look forward to many more opportunities in the Wiregrass area.

Region II held a luncheon on November 13, 2019 at Faulkner University in Montgomery, AL. The speaker was Ms. Maggie Blaedow, State Executive Director for Alabama Court Appointed Special Advocates. This luncheon met the requirements of the NALA Certifying Board for continuing legal education credit required to maintain the CP (Certified Paralegal) credential. Several attendees at this meeting expressed interest in becoming a CASA or either joining the Board of Directors in the Montgomery area. If you missed this luncheon and would like additional information on Alabama CASA, please visit https://alabamacasa.org.

AAPi board members Laura Reaves and Marsha Jordan had the opportunity to speak to students enrolled in the legal studies program at Enterprise State Community College on December 3, 2019. This was a great opportunity to introduce them to AAPi and have a Q&A session with the students about being a paralegal. Much thanks to ESCC for allowing us to visit them!

Region II held a luncheon on December 5, 2019 at Cactus Flower Café in Dothan, AL with Attorney David Hogg of The Hogg Law Firm as the speaker. Mr. Hogg spoke on “Law Office Technology.” This luncheon met the requirements of the NALA Certifying Board for continuing legal education credit required to maintain the CP (Certified Paralegal) credential.

If you know of someone who is in Region II and would like more information on our events, please have them contact Laura Reaves at Laura.Reaves@BeasleyAllen.com, or check out Region II’s Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/AAPiReg2.

Laura

If the plan doesn’t work: Change the plan. Never change the goal.
ROARING INTO THE 20’S WITH AAPi AND REGION III

2019 was a busy year for Region III and after a holiday break, we are roaring into 2020!

The November luncheon was held on November 13, 2019, at noon at the Original Oyster House. Mary Beth O’Brien, QKA, of My Benefits LLC spoke to us Retirement Plan Administration and ERISA. The December Christmas Social at Firehouse Wine Bar on December 11, 2019, was a great way to celebrate the holidays. Thanks to the Region III committee, Danielle Baker, CP Brenda Cochran, CP, Tracie Ford, Carol Wood, CP for all of their planning help. Special thanks to Firehouse Wine Bar and to our sponsors, ProLegal, Carr Allison, and Delaney Development.

Stevie Cordts and Tom Towey of Veritext came to our January 8, 2020 luncheon at the Original Oyster House and gave away fun door prizes a great overview of MyVeritext.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! We have a great schedule of speakers coming up:

- February 12 Faith Nixon of Carr Allison, technology in the courtroom
- March 11 Judson Wells, Carr Allison, mediation
- April 8 Kelly Adams, U.S. District Judge Terry Moorer’s law clerk,
- May 6 Paralegal Day Honorable Don Davis will be our keynote speaker

Region III meets on the second Wednesday of each month at noon. Please come join us for food, fun, networking and CLE's. The member fee is $16.00. Non-member/Guest fee is $18. REMEMBER, you do not have to be a member to attend the monthly luncheons, guests are always welcome.

For more information on Region III, please check our page at AAPi’s website: https://alabamaparalegals.net/Region_III/.

Region III has a Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/877699495950057/.

Until next time,

Kim

Email: kwatson@uhblaw.com
At present we have 149 members in the Association, but we are looking for more! Very soon we will be sending out information on this year’s membership drive. I hope everyone will reach out to a paralegal or legal student you know and refer them to AAPi. Remember all of the benefits that come with membership:

- Reduced costs at monthly luncheons in each region;
- CLEs at most monthly luncheons, CP reviews, and the summer convention;
- Networking opportunities with other paralegals, legal vendors, sponsors and professionals;
- Yearly subscription to the NOVUS, the quarterly newsletter of AAPi;
- Opportunity to join a branch of Alabama Telco Credit Union;
- Access to the AAPi employment listings;
- Mentorship by a member of AAPi’s Board of Directors;
- Drawings to win CP/ACP testing fees award (held at the summer convention);
- Yearly scholarship opportunities for student members;
- Opportunities to join AAPi Board Members in statewide community service projects such as Wills for Heroes or the Parkinson’s Walk to name a few;
- Play a part in the future development of the paralegal profession;
- Access to CP study groups as well as CP reviews during the year; and
- Free proctoring of NALA’s CP Exam by AAPi Board Members.

Share these benefits with a paralegal friend!

Debbie

As an AAPi member you have access to the many job listings posted on our website. New jobs statewide are posted frequently. Don’t miss this opportunity if you are searching for a new job!
Happy New Year Everyone! 2020 is going to be a great year and a great year to receive your certification!! Are you thinking about being a certified paralegal or advanced certified paralegal, well it’s not too late, visit www.nala.org to get further information. Come join us in Birmingham on February 8, 2020 for the CP Review. See information below.

EXAM INFORMATION - Testing is done in two parts: Knowledge and Skills. Examinees have to pass the first part of the exam before taking the second half of the exam. The knowledge testing is held each month with the next testing date being January 31, 2020, so you still have time to contact NALA to register to be on your way to be certified. The Skills exam is held quarterly February, April, July and October. Once you pass the Knowledge exam you can then take the Skills portion with the next testing February 2020. The new CP Review Manual is now available for purchase on NALA’s website. Anyone interested in taking the certification exam please contact me to discuss and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

NALA’S WEBSITE - Visit NALA’s website for updated information and upcoming webinars. Do you know how many CLE credits you have? Do you need CLE credits check out the latest webinars? Go on www.nala.org and check out the new website.

NALA’S CONFERENCE - Mark your calendars and join us at Harrah’s in Atlantic City, New Jersey for NALA’s annual conference July 9-11, 2020.

As your NALA Liaison, if I be of any assistance or answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, Kelly Crowe at kcrowe488@yahoo.com

Kelly

CP Review – Knowledge Exam
Saturday, February 8, 2020
7:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Veritext/Freedom Court Reporting
2nd Floor
Birmingham, AL 35205
ANNOUNCEMENTS:
Student Scholarship Essay topic will be released soon.

The Alabama Association of Paralegals, Inc. administers the Janis Davidson Memorial Scholarship Fund. Each year the scholarship fund gives out two (2) scholarships to deserving AAPi Student Members, one (1) for $1,000.00 and one (1) for $500.00. In order to qualify to receive one of the scholarships, you must meet all of the following requirements:

- You must be a resident citizen of the State of Alabama;
- You must be a student member of AAPi;
- You must show proof of current enrollment in a paralegal studies program of a junior college, college, or university which is within the State of Alabama and which has been accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; and
- You must submit a copy of your transcript which shows that you have a 3.0 or better average on a 4.0 scale in at least 15 semester hours of paralegal course work (or its equivalent in quarter hours).

To apply for these scholarships you must submit an essay (minimum 300 words).
AAPi STUDENT HAPPENINGS

GADSDEN STATE STUDENT MEMBERS

Martha Boling
Tabitha Combs
Alyssa Oliver
Dennis Presley

Thank you Gadsden State for allowing AAPi to speak to your students on January 15, 2020.

FAULKNER UNIVERSITY STUDENT MEMBERS

Drapondra Holmes
Jacob Hulcher

Please look for us soon to schedule a time to meet with all of you!

WALLACE STATE STUDENT MEMBERS

Tracy Borden

Please look for us soon to schedule a time to meet with all of you!

JEFFERSON STTE COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEMBERS

Martin Anthony Edwards-Clark

AAPi will be at Calhoun Community College on March 3, 2020. We can’t wait to meet you!

Thank you Enterprise State for allowing AAPi to speak to your students on December 3, 2019.

Lydia Dillingham, Director
Preserving evidence is a vast topic, one that can be expanded upon for days. We will touch on it very briefly in this article, however, gearing the topic mainly towards the civil arena. One of the first things that a paralegal must do when looking at a case is to determine what, if any, evidence should be preserved. This is particularly important in a product liability case. We have all heard the adage, “no product, no case.” Well, that is essentially true. If a case is going to be hinged on proving a defect in a product and the client’s damages are tied to that defect, it is extremely difficult to do if the product is not available.

It is not always necessarily a product that may need to be preserved, but may be an accident scene or something like a store shelving fixture. It could also be a cellular telephone that was in use or a piece of roadway that was being worked on. It could be something removed by medical personnel at a hospital. If it is something that you believe will be relevant to your case at any point, it is important to work immediately to preserve whatever that may be as soon as you realize its relevance. Even if you preserve it long enough to document the evidence by photographic or other means and then release it because you do not have the means to store it, make sure you do so at the beginning so that you do not regret it later.

Preserving evidence is a rather simple task once you identify what you need to preserve. It is as simple as sending a letter with your request and intentions. The key to that is to make sure you send it to the right people, and to always get confirmation on what you send. If whomever you are sending the request to has a legal department and/or insurance company, that is a good start. Managers, registered agents (as set out by the Secretary of State), presidents of boards of commissioners, etc. are also good. It is all dependent upon what you are preserving. Make sure you get confirmation of delivery on any means of delivery that you choose, preferably a signature.

If nothing else has triggered a duty to preserve, that duty is triggered at the point someone receives this notice. At that point, spoliation issues may apply if the evidence is not safeguarded. Conversely, if you have evidence that you think may be relevant to a case, it is a good idea to safeguard it on your end as well. If you are unsure if it is relevant, keep in mind that a court may one day make that decision for you. If you cannot reasonably retain it, you should provide litigants or prospective litigants with a reasonable opportunity to inspect and test the evidence before it is destroyed. Make sure to keep a written record of any notice and opportunity to inspect given to a potentially adverse party. Make a photographic or videotape record of the evidence, if feasible, if any physical evidence must be discarded. Also, make sure there is no court order or discovery request requiring the preservation of evidence before discarding it.

Once you identify potentially relevant information, it is best to err on the side of caution when deciding whether to preserve evidence, especially if it is not expensive or too cumbersome. Make sure to stay active in the preservation efforts and follow up with company officials or legal counsel throughout the litigation.
I belong to several Facebook paralegal groups that I keep up with on an almost daily basis. Hearing the stories other paralegals are telling about their jobs and daily work is always interesting and enlightening. Today a paralegal had a good one and it had to do with an attorney boss that was obviously micro-managing his employees to the point of madness.

Being micro-managed is frustrating and discouraging. Your progress is often blocked by your boss’s need to review and approve everything, and since you never have the chance to suggest improvements or demonstrate your own ability with a micro-manager you have no opportunity to really shine. In this instance, the paralegal came to the group asking for advice on how to handle a recent situation. She had made the “terrible mistake” of making a single typo in an email that was sent to the defense counsel. Now her boss insists on reviewing every one of her emails before she sends them.

That seems a bit extreme given it was one typo and this paralegal claimed a near spotless mistake-free work history. In addition, she was carrying an intense caseload (something a lot of us can relate to). Her complaint was that in addition to this instance, her boss was also micro-managing multiple other tasks she performs including the very mundane task of filing. She was nervous all the time, was becoming filled with self doubt, and her work pace was being throttled.

The micro-managers scrutiny and attention to detail will take time away from your job, putting you in a no-win situation. You may also feel confused by contradictory messages and information you receive from your boss, which reflects his/her shifting (and sometimes mutually exclusive) priorities and goals.

The good news is that you, as paralegals, can reduce the stress and strain of working for a micromanaging attorney-boss. However, you can help only yourself because you won’t be able to rehabilitate your micromanaging boss.

The first thing you can do is replace your boss with your own positive inner coach boss. Talk to yourself and treat yourself the way you want to be managed. Encourage, empower, appreciate and value yourself and your ideas. Secondly, be prepared, be thorough with each task, be able to back up your work with proof, and keep a smile on your face.

- Prepare in advance for scheduled calls/visits with your boss and certainly be ready for surprise calls and visits. Always have an update on the tip of your tongue. If the boss is nearby, expect a visit and have a detailed response ready.
• Learn your boss’s pattern and anticipate it. He/she will call you less if you always have the info ready and may learn to trust you.
• Get detailed project instructions from your boss in order to avoid future errors.
• Pay attention when your boss shows you his/her priorities and concerns, then play to those aspects to your advantage.
• When presenting options, provide two equally acceptable alternatives so that your boss feels as though they have control when choosing one.
• If he/she calls unexpectedly and you are dealing with a time-sensitive problem, ask if you can get back to them. Let them know you must prioritize it.
• If the boss won’t listen to your perspective, enlist the aid of statistics, representatives or other authority figures whom the boss respects to win your point.
• When dealing with a sticky issue, speak to the micro-managers strengths and comfort levels, using clients, favored people, articles, news reports and competitors’ information rather than your opinion against theirs.
• Keep up with company politics and stay on good terms with as many people as possible. You’ll need allies, support systems, and a solid reputation as you continue to work out issues with the micro-manager.
• Alert, warn, and inform your boss about important information to show you have his/her back on potential issues. Reinforce that you are on his/her side.
• Use the boss’s own beliefs, preferences, and concerns when presenting suggestions.
• Keep an email trail of the communication between you and your boss.
• Avoid direct confrontation.

Instead of fearing the micro-manager boss and keeping your head down and hoping for the best, empower yourself and do things you know are good at and that produce good results that your micro-managing boss can appreciate. Remember, you are a valuable asset and know your job.

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION: https://myparalegalplace.com/paralegals-how-to-cope-with-a-micro-managing-boss/
Save the Date
GAME DAY with AAPi

Mark your Calendars! AAPi’s 2020 Convention & Annual Meeting will once again be dual track with 19 topics and the opportunity to earn 10 CLEs. We look forward to seeing you there!

Dates: August 20-23, 2020
Venue: Hampton Inn & Suites, Orange Beach, Alabama with catering by Alabama Coastal Catering
Room Rates: Rooms start at just $179 per night
Registration: $200 on or before July 1, 2020 for active members and includes 2 tickets to the Friday night dinner, as well as 1 ticket for the Thursday reception and lunch on both Friday and Saturday

AAPi is looking into expanding Region meetings to areas outside of the current primary locations. If you are interested in attending a Region meeting but live or work too far from the primary location, be sure to check your Region page for information about meetings that may be closer for you to attend. If you have a suggestion, contact your Region Director. We want everyone to have the opportunity to join in meetings as much as possible.
AAPi was so honored to again be invited to have a booth at the Beasley Allen Legal Expo on November 14th. President, Angela Henderson, CP and Second Vice President-Membership, Deborah Paul, CP were on hand to talk to as many of the 1,600+ legal professionals as possible.

We ran into some long time friends and made a lot of new friends. Many attorneys requested to post jobs on our website and some did not know about AAPi or our educational seminars. Most expressed an interest in sending their paralegals to our events and took information on AAPi back to their office.

AAPi could never accomplish the things we do for legal professionals and students without the generous support of our sponsors.
NOVUS is the official publication of the Alabama Association of Paralegals, Inc. This publication is published quarterly, and is a benefit of membership in AAPi. Subscriptions to NOVUS are included in annual membership fees.

To submit materials for publication in NOVUS, please contact AAPi Communications Chair, Jebbie Austin, at jra@cunninghambounds.com.

Opinions expressed in articles and features herein are those of the author(s), and do not necessarily reflect the views of AAPi. The Editor strongly encourages the submission of materials for publication; however, the Editor reserves the right to edit material and accept or reject materials submitted.